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Two more victims of Gaza suicide attack die

IDF doubtful of keeping July 1 deadline

ALON PINKAS and BILL HUTMAN

CHIEF of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak and Planning Branch head Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan both expressed doubt yesterday that Israel and the PLO could meet the July 1 target date for partial IDF redeployment in Judea and Samaria, and elections for the Palestinian Authority council.

Both Shahak and Dayan were attending a meeting on the next phase of negotiations between Israel and the PLO, convened by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin yesterday.

The two presented Rabin with a road separation plan for the Gaza Strip devised by the Southern Command, and recommended that the two roads closed to Palestinian traffic after Sunday's suicide attacks remain closed until the Palestinians accept the plan.

As of late Sunday night, Palestinians were barred from traveling along the two access roads leading to Netzarim and Kfar Darom, and the main north-to-south road linking Gaza City to Khan Yunis, which also links Netzarim and Kfar Darom.

Regarding the July 1 deadline, a senior army source said last night that "the IDF's view is that redeployment outside of cities and towns such as Kalkilya, Jenin and Tulkarm must be discussed only after PA Chairman Yasser Arafat unequivocally demonstrates that he controls the area under his jurisdiction, especially Gaza."

"It's true that Hamas's hotbed is Gaza, where they are supported by at least 30 percent of the population, but self-rule cannot be extended to cities in Judea and Samaria unless self-rule ceases to be a term and becomes reality in Gaza," the source said.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said last night on Channel One's *Popolitika* that the government had decided not to halt talks but to keep its obligations on the second stage of the Oslo Accord. He rejected freezing negotiations, claiming that terror would not be frozen.

Industry and Trade Minister Micha Harish said yesterday that "it's already clear that the timetable for the Oslo Accord is canceled."

But Police Minister Moshe Shahal said Israel has no choice but to forge ahead with the peace process, despite the continued terror attacks. "There is no alternative, even if the situation continues," Shahal told reporters in Jerusalem.

A first measure taken by the IDF to combat future attacks is a plan for separate roads.

The plan concerns the access roads leading to the main Gaza Strip north-to-south artery, a highway on which both Israeli and Palestinian vehicles are allowed to travel as stipulated in the Cairo Agreement, military sources said last night.

The plan recommends the construction of two alternative routes to be used by Palestinian cars, while the existing roads will be exclusively serve IDF and Israeli civilian vehicles.

Shahal confirmed that security officials decided to separate Palestinian and Israeli traffic in the area of Sunday's attacks, which he said had reaffirmed the need for "the separation of the Palestinian and Israeli populations."

However, the IDF's Gaza area deputy division commander, Col. Yossi Gez, told reporters yesterday that total separation on the roads is unattainable.

"Separation requires extensive infrastructure and road construction. That takes time and money and until then, 100 percent separation cannot be achieved," he said in a briefing.



Sgt. Zvi Narbat's comrades mourn at his funeral yesterday in Rishon LeZion's military cemetery. (Alon Ron/Israel Sun)

PA court sentences bomb instructor

AN ISLAMIC Jihad activist became the first person to be convicted by a Palestinian security court, which gave him a 15-year sentence yesterday for burying teenagers alive to test their mettle as suicide bombers.

The 16-hour trial, which began after Sunday's suicide attacks near Kfar Darom and Netzarim, was seen by many Gazans as a concession to Israeli demands, much like Sunday night's arrest of 150 Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists.

Palestinian Authority Attorney General Attorney-General Khaled Qidre said yesterday that the leading spokesman of Islamic Jihad Abdullah Shami would go on trial Sunday and other trials would follow.

Many of those arrested in the police raids across the Gaza Strip were arrested before but released after a few days. Two youths in Khan Yunis were arrested after a gunfight.

The security courts were con-

demned both by Palestinian human rights activists and opposition groups as unconstitutional when Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat established them by decree in early February, in response to the Beit Lid bombing.

Police sources said they believe Arafat is serious this time about putting down a challenge he considers a threat to his rule, because Sunday's bombings took place in Gaza. Moreover, Hamas was shown to be making bombs there in the Sheikh Radwan explosion a week ago. Some weapons have been confiscated, they noted.

Samir Ali Jedi, arrested on March 5, was convicted by three senior police officers on the evidence of six witnesses, age 14 to 19, who said he had them buried alive for several minutes to test their courage. When they passed the test, Jedi said they were ready to undertake suicide missions.

Some of them reported the initiation rite to their parents, who passed on the information to police.

"He buried them in graves and closed the graves with boards for 10 minutes to see if they were strong enough to face death. When he opened the graves he declared them ready for these activities," Qidre told *The Jerusalem Post*.

Jedi, 34, known as Abu Ali in the Shajaiyeh neighborhood of Gaza City, taught youngsters Islam. A cousin of Jedi said he supported Islamic Jihad but was not a member. "Police stripped the youths, beat them and forced them to confess or be called collaborators," he claimed. There is no appeal against convictions in the security courts which hear evidence in secret.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres urged Arafat to arrest more Hamas religious leaders.

"It is clear that these youths who committed suicide were incited by religious men," he said yesterday, according to AP.

"They have to be found because in the end those who commit suicide are also victims - victims of stupidity and temptation..."

"Those who tempt them to murder... have to be brought to justice and tried. The weapons have to be confiscated."

Senior Hamas activist Imad Falouji called Jedi's trial "a political trial."

Qidre said trials will continue this Thursday and early next week.

A serious test of the PA's resolve will be the trial of Shami, the most prominent spokesman of Islamic Jihad who has been in jail since January 24. He is to be tried next week, Qidre said. The exact charges have not yet been drafted but will focus on Shami's influence over Anwar Sukar, his neighbor in Shajaiyeh who was (Continued on Page 2)

JUDY SIEGEL and Itim

THE number of those killed in the bombing of the Egged bus near Kfar Darom on Sunday rose to eight yesterday after the deaths of 20-year-old Alisa Flatow of the US and Sgt. Avraham Arditi, 19, of Jerusalem.

Arditi's death brought to seven the number of soldiers who died as a result of the two suicide attacks in the Gaza Strip.

He was brought to Beersheba's Soroka Hospital, where his condition never stabilized in the intensive care unit.

Arditi will be buried today at 2 p.m. at Mount Herzl Cemetery.

He is survived by his parents, two sisters and a brother, residents of the city's Kiryat Hayovel neighborhood.

Arditi was a graduate of Himmelfarb High School, and was drafted in August. He wanted to serve in the Givati Brigade like his brother, who was injured in Lebanon and in the attack on soldiers taking the oath at the Western Wall in the 1980s.

Flatow, a Brandeis University student, came here as a tourist and was studying at Ulpiana Yeshiva Mishmat in Jerusalem. She had gone with friends to visit people they knew at Netzarim on Sunday, and was in critical condition upon arrival at Beersheba's Soroka Hospital.

She was declared brain dead yesterday morning, and doctors

appealed to her family via the US ambassador to donate her organs for transplant here. Her family in New Jersey, which is Orthodox, conferred with rabbis before sending their consent, and the organs were removed from her body yesterday afternoon.

The six soldiers killed on Sunday were buried yesterday. (Story, Page 2).

In a statement, her father Steven said his daughter loved Israel, and "her lasting contribution to the people of Israel is that her organs were donated for the saving of lives in need."

Twenty-nine of the wounded from Sunday's two terrorist attacks were still hospitalized yesterday. Four were in serious condition and the rest in moderate or good condition and improving.

Beersheba's Soroka Hospital was treating three patients in serious condition and 10 in moderate condition. Two were discharged.

Askelon's Barzilai Hospital discharged two toddlers, Naomi Moyal, 4, and her sister, Tehiya, 2, who had been slightly wounded. Their mother was in Soroka Hospital attached to a respirator, in serious condition.

Barzilai was treating 20-year-old soldier Lior Gabbai of Ashkelon for light shrapnel wounds; 20-year-old Moshe Takun of Yehud, who had a nail removed from his palm; 18-year-old soldier Michal Scheinfeld, who underwent knee surgery to treat a mild injury; and an Ashkelon border policeman.

At Hadassah-University Hos-

(Continued on Page 2)

Friends remember Alisa Flatow as kind, gentle

MARILYN HENRY NEW YORK

IN Alisa Flatow's high-school file is a letter the faculty had written in support of her applications to college.

"Alisa is alive," the letter said. "There is a sparkle in her eye."

In her hometown of West Orange, New Jersey, and at Brandeis University, stunned friends and teachers remembered Flatow yesterday as a kind, gentle young woman.

Flatow died yesterday from injuries she sustained during Sunday's terror incident against bus No. 36 near Kfar Darom. She and Chavi Levine, from Englewood, New Jersey, had been traveling to a resort in Gaza for the Pessah holiday.

Her funeral is scheduled for tomorrow in New Jersey. Chavi Levine, who was injured, was en route back home to the US.

Flatow, 20, was the oldest of five children of Steven and Rosalyn Flatow.

Rosalyn Flatow works for the Jewish Education Association of the Metrowest, New Jersey, federation.

A junior majoring in sociology at Brandeis in Waltham, Massachusetts, Flatow had been on leave since January in order to study at Ulpiana Yeshiva Mishmat in Jerusalem.

At Temple Shalom, the Reform synagogue down the road from Brandeis where Flatow was a teaching assistant in the religious school last year, Ina Ra-



Alisa Flatow (AP)

binowicz, who taught the sixth-graders, said, "She was from a traditional background, and she brought something special into this class that enriched the students. They listened to her."

While at the Frisch School, an Orthodox high school in Paramus, New Jersey, Flatow worked as a volunteer, teaching Soviet immigrant children to read and write Hebrew. She also taught them baseball.

"She had a tremendously positive attitude and a quiet sense of humor," said Rabbi Saul Zucker, the associate principal at the Frisch School.

Prison heads to be punished for easing up on Yair Levy

THE Prisons Service committee investigating former Shas MK Yair Levy's violations of his rehabilitation program decided yesterday to take measures against a number of officers responsible for the terms of Levy's imprisonment, including the director of the prison where he is being held.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal approved the recommendations.

The director of Ma'asiyahu Prison, where Levy is serving a four-year sentence, will face a disciplinary hearing, and the director of the Prisons Service central region will receive an administrative notation in his personal file, as will the deputy director of Ma'asiyahu. A notation of non-professional conduct will be made against the head of the education and rehabilitation department and the national

rehabilitation officer.

The committee was asked to investigate how Levy failed to meet the terms of his rehabilitation program, in which he would work during the day at a Bnei Brak yeshiva, Or Haim, and return to jail at night. After news photographers spotted Levy regularly taking strolls in the city, and going home and to his synagogue, Shahal ordered a seven-member committee to examine the terms of Levy's rehabilitation.

The committee did not find any wrongdoing in sending Levy to the yeshiva, near his home, as the aim of the rehabilitation program is to reintegrate prisoners into their communities.

Rabin to press US Congress to help modernize, reduce Jordanian military

PRIME Minister Yitzhak Rabin has sent word to Washington that he wants Congress to support plans to modernize and downsize the Jordanian military, sources say.

Rabin has already been a driving force in pressing Congress to accelerate its original three-year plan for eliminating Jordan's debt.

Now, with growing congressional support for writing off all of Jordan's \$275 million debt, Rabin believes Congress should embark on the second phase: helping the Jordanian military.

He believes Hussein's aging military should also benefit from peace. This would include a consolidation of Jordan's four divisions.

Last summer, King Hussein sent a letter to President Clinton which included a plea to help

modernize Jordan's army. In response, US officials promised that some assistance for this purpose would be forthcoming.

Washington sources say the US has sent Jordan a relatively modest amount of supplies, including trucks, communications equipment, and ammunition.

But so far, the US has not come through with more important military systems for Jordan such as tanks, upgraded avionics, air-defense equipment, and electronic radar, Washington analysts say.

Jordan is also believed to be seeking older F-16A aircraft, but it remains unclear if Israel would support this.

According to a report in yesterday's *Washington Post*, Secretary of State Warren Christopher told

King Hussein that he will neither receive F-16 aircraft nor Hawk anti-aircraft missiles because of congressional budgetary restraints.

In Hussein's letter to Clinton, it is believed that he asked for an assurance that \$2.1 billion in annual aid - the same amount Egypt receives - be given to Jordan over the next 10 years.

However, it appears that the amount of military assistance set aside by Congress for this coming fiscal year will certainly be less than that requested by King Hussein.

One idea is to provide the Jordanian military with "draw-downs" of US military stocks, but beyond a modest amount, this too would require congressional approval.

Muashar, Shamir present credentials, Page 12

Notice to the Public

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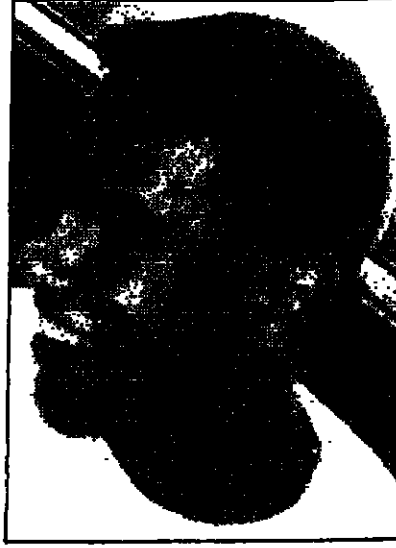
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Staff-Sgt. Meir Scheinwald



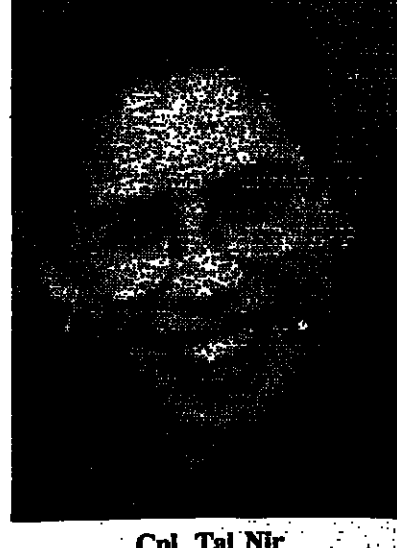
Sgt. Itai Diener



Sgt. Zvi Narbat



Sgt. Netta Sofrin



Cpl. Tal Nir

Funerals held for six suicide bombing victims

SIX of the soldiers killed in Sunday's attack were buried yesterday.

Sgt. Yuval Regev was laid to rest in the Holon military cemetery. Hundreds of people participated in the ceremony, among them his family, his unit commander and his army comrades.

Regev was praised by his commander and friends, as well as by the mayor and chief rabbi of Holon. His unit's representative said he was one of the best fighters of his unit, always helpful and caring to his companions. He added

that they would continue fighting terrorism, and that his death had changed everybody's life.

The funerals of Netta Sofrin, 20, Zvi Narbat, 19, and Itai Diener, 19, took place in Rishon LeZion's military cemetery.

"Netta was blessed with spiritual quietness, initiative, leadership, responsibility and volunteering," Sofrin's commander said, stressing his determination to find and punish her murderers. Rishon LeZion Mayor Meir Nitzan remembered how Sofrin volunteered to help in a Negev de-

velopment town because of her love of people.

Diener's funeral was attended by his family, friends, fellow Givati soldiers and city residents. "Itai was one of the best soldiers in the regiment," his commander said. "He was very motivated, quiet and loved by his friends."

He added that Diener was a man of principles and values, who loved life and his family.

Diener's grandfather praised him and said that not even in his worst dreams had he ever thought he would have to bury his

DAVID RUDGE and Tim

eldest grandson. "God took yet another flower from the Jewish people," he said.

Narbat was buried next to Diener, whose funeral took place a few minutes earlier. Narbat's commander said that "words cannot express the good that was in Tzvi. He was a person of values, always smiling and a great fighter."

Tal Nir's funeral took place in

her home at Kibbutz Miflasim near Sderot, attended by hundreds of family members, Kibbutz members and friends. The woman soldier's funeral was quiet, and a crying friend said: "She was quiet and relaxed, and she's thus being buried quietly."

The family requested from the army that Tal have a civilian funeral, and therefore no speeches were given by military personnel.

The military section of the Sederot cemetery was packed with mourners as Staff-Sgt. Meir Scheinwald was laid to rest.

Scheinwald, 20, who was born and raised in Safed, was eulogized by Rabbi Tzafania Drori, head of the hesder yeshiva in Kiryat Shmona where the young Givati Brigade soldier had studied.

Hundreds of people, led by Scheinwald's parents Moshe and Nehama - both well-known educators in the Safed area - including relatives, friends and members of Scheinwald's army unit attended the ceremony.

Drori said Scheinwald had been a guiding light to all who knew him, and would be sorely

missed. "We know the wonderful family he came from - his parents who go from their home on the peak of the hill to the hospital to give someone medicine and then return by foot. We know the background from which his good-heartedness sprang," said Drori.

Relatives said Scheinwald had tried to succeed in everything he did and had very much wanted to become an officer. He had apparently woken early on the morning of the attack to get to his base on time to replace a friend who was supposed to go home on leave.

SOCIAL & PERSONAL

Mrs. Beverly M. Taylor, chairman of the South London Liberal Synagogue and personal assistant to the senior vice president of the Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues (ULPS) London, returned to London this morning after a brief visit to attend the garden party celebrating the marriage of her niece, Michal Yudelman, to Thomas O'Dwyer, of Tipperary.

Singer: Halting talks would give 'prize' to attackers

CAIRO (AP) - Israel is going ahead with negotiations with the PLO because suspending talks would give a "prize" to suicide car bombers who killed eight people in the Gaza Strip, the chief delegate said.

Yoel Singer made the statement as he arrived at a Cairo hotel for negotiations on proposed elections for a council to govern Palestinian autonomous zones in the Gaza Strip and Judea/Samaria.

Later, Singer met privately for 90 minutes with Saeb Erekat, head of the Palestinian delegation. Both men declined to speak to reporters after the meeting. Their teams then joined the talks.

Singer said the decision to keep the talks going was made at a meeting yesterday morning with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

"Our decision... is to continue with the negotiations because by suspending the negotiations, we

can only give the prize to the terrorists," he told reporters.

Singer also repeated a call for the PLO to halt the attacks against Israelis by radical Moslem groups opposed to the peace talks.

"The Palestinians must make the decision whether they want to live in a society infested with terrorism or whether they want to live in a peaceful society," he said.

"We hope they will make the right decision and fight against such acts of terrorism in a better way than they have been doing so far," said Singer.

"It is a Palestinian decision - how do they want to build their nation, in what kind of society do they want to live," he said.

Clinton: Terror mustn't derail peace process

LOS ANGELES (AP) - New incidents of terrorist violence in the Gaza Strip must not be allowed to derail the peace process in the Middle East, President Clinton insisted Sunday. "Let us stiffen our resolve," he told a Jewish organization.

"We have to find a way to push for peace in the Middle East and not let the forces of disintegration destroy it," Clinton said.

Speaking to members of the Jewish Federation of Los Angeles, Clinton said: "I offer my condolences of the American people to the people of Israel and the government of Israel, as well as to the American citizens and their families who were affected by this attack."

"Once more, the enemies of peace have sought to abuse the opportunity peace presents - to kill it, to kill hope, to kill all possibility of a normal life for the people of Israel [and] for the Palestinians struggling to do the right thing there," Clinton said.

"Why do people blow up buses in Israel? They are people who believe they can only be successful in life if people are dying," Clinton said.

The president said people everywhere must resist the temptation to define success "by someone else's failure."

COURT

(Continued from Page 1)

one of the Beit Lid bombers, Qidre said.

To dampen criticism about the security courts, PA Justice Minister Freih Abu Meidia recently said the first trials would be of collaborators. A week ago, he mentioned imminent trials for specific collaborators connected with the killing of Islamic Jihad activist Hani Abed in November and six Fatah activists by IDF troops a year ago. Yesterday, in response to the Kfar Darom-Netzarim attacks, he said "Israel is responsible for guarding its settlements and soldiers."

Qidre denied that collaborator trials had been abruptly postponed in the wake of Sunday's attacks. Jedi's trial date was fixed more than week ago, he said. "I am the one who decides," he said. "We look at all cases attacking our security in the same way."

So far only the trials of Islamic radicals had been scheduled, he said.

VICTIMS

(Continued from Page 1)

pital in Jerusalem's Ein Kerem, Shlomo Ben-Haim was in serious condition but improving after undergoing three separate operations; Liora Shuker of Rosh Ha'ayin, who suffered serious chest and head wounds, underwent an operation in the neurosurgery department; and Nevat Kahana of Kfar Sava was in moderate condition and fully conscious after undergoing surgery to repair a fractured skull.

Nine patients were still at Sheba Hospital, but only one was in serious condition. The condition of two others who had suffered serious wounds improved to moderate, along with three who remained in moderate condition, while three were in good condition.

David Rudge and Amir Rozenblit contributed to this report.

DRIVE CAREFULLY!!

'Rabin hoping for continued American funding of PLO'

DAVID MAKOVSKY

convictions of Palestinians who commit acts against Israel. (The PA announced the first conviction of a Palestinian yesterday); and the disarming of Islamic militants.

One option would be to craft legislation that would focus on these three criteria as being pivotal for the PLO to meet by a set date.

Of less immediate priority for Rabin is the PLO's immediate amending of its 1964 charter which calls for the destruction of Israel, sources say.

In a September 9, 1993, letter to Rabin, Arafat said those aspects of the charter calling for Israel's destruction are "no longer valid," but he has yet to convene the PLO quasi-parliamentary Palestine National Council, which is empowered by a two-thirds majority to amend the charter. Arafat has said even before the Oslo accord was signed that he did not have the needed two-thirds majority supporting modification of the charter.

One idea that Rabin is considering would be to insist that Arafat run in the Palestinian elections on a campaign platform calling for the change of the charter.

In contrast to Rabin, Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin believes the US should stay out of the issue of compliance altogether. This has angered members of Congress, who note that what is involved is how US money is being spent. Beilin, who just returned from the US last week, believes Israel needs to step-up its efforts to educate US congressmen on the intricacies of the peace process.

"Either the Rabin or Beilin approach means that before June 30 comes around, Israel is likely to be lobbying for aid to the PLO," a Washington source said, adding, "This is going to be much harder than obtaining debt relief to Jordan. Nobody has anything against King Hussein, but they do have things against Arafat. There are members of Congress who believe that the PLO should not get anything."

Brodet: PA deficit due to excessive spending

JOSE ROSENFELD

PROFLIGATE spending has led the Palestinian Authority to run up a deficit of nearly a third of its annual budget, Treasury Director-General David Brodet said yesterday.

At an informal donor-country meeting in Washington last week, the PA's budget deficit was estimated at \$135 million out of an annual \$440m. budget. Brodet, who participated in the meeting, said that part of the deficit derived from a lack of spending discipline.

According to Brodet, spending exceeded budget targets as the PA hired more police than allowed, as well as increased the size of the civil administration. In addition, the authority raised public sector salaries.

The PA responded that it had to hire more people as an anti-jobless measure due to the closure. A working group led by Norway, including the US, the European Union and Japan, will fix deficit figures and propose how to finance the deficit by April 28, when the formal donor meeting is scheduled to take place.

Brodet said he is more optimistic now that donor countries will shift money earmarked for projects to funding for the Palestinian Authority's current expenditures.

The donor countries also agreed to establish a prototype industrial zone in Gaza, said Brodet. They commissioned the World Bank to do a feasibility study and Israel agreed to fund the infrastructure for the project. According to Brodet, it will take about a year and a half to get the prototype industrial zone up and running. Brodet said both the Palestinians and the donor countries rejected a proposal to build the zones on the Israeli side.

'Vacationers should maintain vigil'

ISRAELIS vacationing during the Pessah week in both Israel and abroad should increase their alertness in the face of possible attacks; the Prime Minister's adviser on terrorism Brig-Gen Yigal Pressler said in a special travel and holiday advisory issued yesterday.

Pressler calls on Israelis to "pay attention to suspicious objects, cars and individuals as well as to unusual behavior."

In his advisory, Pressler recommends that Israelis traveling abroad should consult the "Preventive safety behavior manual" distributed by travel agents in Israel's air and sea ports. In case of trouble, travelers are advised to consult the Israeli embassy or consulate in the country they are visiting.

In the advisory, which does not include countries considered security risks, Pressler emphasizes that there is no current information justifying cancellation of visits or any other holiday plans. Alon Pinkas

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Cpl. Tal Nir

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continued
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مكتبة النخيل



Israel's Eurovision representative, Liora, helps distribute Pessah gift boxes to residents of the Hatzrot Koah caravan site yesterday, on behalf of the One People-Beautiful People organization. (Tamar Masafi)

UK highest for antisemitic attacks in '94

THE most violent antisemitic attacks last year took place in Great Britain, followed by the US, France and Germany, according to Antisemitism Worldwide 1994, in a report published yesterday.

The report was prepared by Tel Aviv University's Antisemitism Study Project in cooperation with the World Jewish Congress, the Anti-Defamation League and the government's Antisemitism Monitoring Forum. The report was presented to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin two weeks ago.

Among the report's findings are signs of initial cooperation between Moslem fundamentalists and the extreme right; increased collaboration between the extreme right in different European countries and the US; and a return to traditional stereotypes of Jewish domination.

For the third year, Britain remained the most violent country regarding antisemitic and racist attacks, with nearly 50 incidents. Violent attacks in Western Europe doubled last year from 15 to 31. In Germany, the number

of antisemitic attacks of all kinds increased 100 percent.

"It's interesting to note that in Germany there was a negative correlation between attacks on Jews, which rose last year, and attacks on other ethnic groups, which decreased," said the project's Roni Stauber, who attributed this partly to the drop in foreigners being allowed to immigrate, as well as the ceremonies commemorating the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II.

"There appears to be growing Moslem extremist and right collaboration throughout the Western world," said project director Dina Porat. "For example, in Sweden something called Radio Islam broadcasts a combination of extreme antisemitic and anti-Israel propaganda and the ideas of neo-Nazis and Holocaust deniers."

The US also witnessed a 10 percent increase in antisemitic activities. Nation of Islam activists there have accused Jews of having been or

having financed slave traders, and using the Holocaust to deflect attention from the slave trade and Black suffering.

The report's authors showed several examples of antisemitic writings at yesterday's press conference including: *The New Order*, the newspaper of the American Nazi Party; an antisemitic pamphlet from Bulgaria featuring on its cover a huge spider with a Star of David on its back; the general weekly *Rumbo* from Costa Rica, with a cover story on "Jewish Power"; and *Al-Kuds*, a Moslem newspaper published in Moscow.

Even countries without a significant Jewish population such as Japan have seen a rise in antisemitic writings, Porat said.

She also noted that among the return to traditional motifs and stereotypes was a modern version of the blood libel with the Jews being accused of creating and spreading the AIDS disease.

The report will be presented to the Knesset, the US Congress, the European Parliament and the UN Human Rights Committee.

Lack of funds paralyzes Histadrut

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

LESS than 315,000 workers are currently paying Histadrut membership fees - not 500-600,000 as the Histadrut leadership claims - virtually paralyzing the Histadrut due to the lack of funds and leaving it unable to finance most of its operations, reliable Histadrut sources said yesterday.

Before the elections last May, the Histadrut had 1.8 million paying members. But since the elections and the advent of the National Health Law, severing the Histadrut from its Kupat Holim, membership has plummeted and the police investigation of the former Histadrut leaders is deterring workers from joining the labor federation, the sources explained.

In a precedent-setting move, the Maccabi health fund's workers' committee Amit yesterday petitioned Jerusalem's Labor Court demanding organization fees no longer be collected from its members for the Histadrut. The court hearing was set for Thursday.

The petition, presented by attorneys Haim Berenson and

Dafna Shmulevitz, claims that Amit, as a workers organization, has the same right to collect membership fees from Maccabi workers in the civil service and public sector as the Histadrut.

The petition was filed against the public employers and the Histadrut, who signed a framework agreement in January regulating the collection of organization fees of 0.7% from unorganized workers, for the Histadrut. Amit argues that this agreement is discriminatory and in violation of the freedom of organization.

The agreement, states the petition, helps create a Histadrut monopoly in labor relations. Amit demands that its members be allowed to pay the 0.7% fee to their own representative organization, and not be forced to pay the Histadrut as well.

Histadrut spokeswoman Rahel Blustein said that the Maccabi employees consists of no more than 5,000 workers, and have never functioned as a workers' union or organization. Amit is

merely trying to exploit a legal loophole in order to get organization fees intended for representative workers' organizations.

Histadrut leaders fear that this petition will prevent other workers from joining as well, due to the Histadrut's declining image, following Histadrut Chairman Haim Ramon's initiating the police investigation into alleged corruption by the Histadrut's previous leadership.

Histadrut sources said that several activists and labor council secretaries want to resign because they cannot recruit members, as Ramon has asked them to do. "Ramon sends us to recruit members and persuade workers to pay organization fees, but workers are demanding to cancel their Histadrut membership because of Ramon's doings in the Histadrut," head of the labor council secretaries' forum Pini Kabbalo said this week.

The public doesn't distinguish between the Histadrut which Ramon keeps denouncing, and the "new" Histadrut under his leadership, Kabbalo said.

Histadrut Labor faction accuses party of abandoning them 'in the battlefield'

HISTADRUT Labor faction members are demanding party support in the police investigation against former Histadrut leaders, and are accusing Labor of abandoning them "wounded in the battlefield."

One faction member said yesterday that the party leaders' silence in face of the inquiry and the new Histadrut leaders' announcements branding their predecessors as corrupt created the impression that hundreds of people who have been working hard and honestly for decades are also

corrupt. They've turned all of us into criminals and thieves."

Labor Secretary-General Nissim Zivli sharply criticized the police of "leaking details from the Histadrut investigation in a biased way, to cause panic among Histadrut workers."

Zivli, who spoke at Labor's Histadrut faction meeting on Sunday, promised that those who acted for the party will get full backing, and stressed that "Labor is being pushed into a political trap. The party must not judge anyone before the investi-

gation is concluded."

Zivli sharply criticized the Histadrut's new leaders, without naming them, for turning the investigation into a publicity circus for their own interests.

Zivli was referring especially to MK Shmuel Avital, who has come under fire for inviting the press en masse to his Histadrut office last Thursday to witness his handing over some more material to the police. Avital, with the full cooperation of the police, made a statement to the press concerning the guilt of the suspects.

High Court rules Bezek strike 'political'

IN a precedent-setting ruling, the High Court of Justice yesterday overturned a decision by the National Labor Court, which determined that the strike by Bezek workers in 1992 was legitimate.

The petition, filed by Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair and Bezek, claimed that the strike was political and the labor court's decision set a dangerous legal precedent in a very important realm.

The High Court ruled that the strike by Bezek workers against the government's plans to end Bezek's monopoly over telecommunications was of "a political

nature." Such a strike, the court said, should have only consisted of a protest such as "a short, symbolic strike."

The extended strike by the workers, the court continued, turned the protest into a political strike which is prohibited by law.

The court noted that a "political strike" constitutes a protest over something that is not directly connected to the employment conditions of the workers. Instead, such a protest is actually aimed at a third party - the government - which cannot answer to petitions.

In the ruling, Justice Dov Le-

vine noted that there was not sufficient evidence to prove that by ending Bezek's monopoly, government would directly harm the well-being of the workers.

Yesterday's decision has important implications for the continuation of state privatization.

The strike in question began in July 1992. Bezek petitioned the Tel Aviv Labor Court, which ruled the strike illegitimate. The Histadrut appealed to the National Labor Court, which ruled the strike legitimate, saying that not every strike against the government is a political strike. (Iim)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Liba'i: Health law won't be changed in 1995

The ministerial committee on legislation, headed by Justice Minister David Liba'i, decided yesterday that during the first year of the National Health Law, no changes will be made to the law in order to fully test the elements of the reform.

Liba'i said that the government would consider changes to help weaker groups this year, but would not forward anything for approval until 1996.

Firemen help foil robbery

Two Holon firemen helped foil a robbery at a local branch of Bank Hapoalim yesterday afternoon. The robber fled the bank on foot with NIS 50,000, but the firemen, who were in the bank during the robbery, chased after him. One drove his motorcycle after the robber, while the other followed on foot. They alerted a passing police car which joined in the chase. The robber eventually slipped and fell at a street corner. The policeman then apprehended him and was aided by other police who had arrived in the area. (Iim)

Court petitioned to block Jaffa construction

The "Manof Center for Jewish Information" petitioned the High Court of Justice yesterday, asking it to stop all work on the controversial building site on Yefet Street in Jaffa.

The petition calls on the Tel Aviv local planning and building committee, Mayor Ronni Milo, the municipality and the municipal engineer not to allow the companies working at the site to continue, until additional checks are carried out to see if any graves or human bones still remain there. The petitioners also asked that the Antiquities Authority and its director-general, Amir Dvori, stop all removal of human bones from the site. The petition seeks to have the handling of the matter transferred to a ministerial committee and for a Religious Affairs Ministry representative to be present at the site if work continues. (Iim)

Police arrest organizers of Kach camp

Jerusalem police yesterday arrested six minors and an adult suspected of organizing a Kach camp. They were arrested at the central bus station, when a search of them turned up handbills, Kach tee-shirts, camping equipment, and a list of youngsters scheduled to take part in the camp. A Kach spokesman said the camp opened a few days ago, and the youths had received lessons in the ideology of Kach founder Rabbi Meir Kahane, had traveled throughout the country and had undergone physical training. (Iim)

Winning cards

In yesterday's Mifal Hapais daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the ace of spades, jack of hearts, ace of diamonds, and eight of clubs.

Tsur bans produce from moshav that aided smugglers

AGRICULTURE Minister Ya'acov Tsur yesterday ordered ministry inspectors not to permit the entry of produce from Moshav Bdoelach in Gush Katif because several of its members are suspected of aiding smugglers.


The order will be in effect until it can be guaranteed that shipment certificates belonging to Israeli farmers will not fall into the hands of Palestinians who use them for smuggling vegetables.

Tsur's decision came after inspectors on Sunday night uncovered an attempt to smuggle vegetables involving Israeli trucks, which tried to bring produce from the autonomous region under cover of having been grown by Bdoelach farmers. A check showed that the Israeli trucks had entered the autonomous region after changing license plates, and was then loaded by Palestinian farmers.

Ofir Reich, director-general of the Agricultural Inspection Authority, said such smuggling is particularly dangerous, since the trucks could also be used for smuggling in weapons.

Tsur said Gush Katif farmers had to help the ministry fight the minority among them who were helping smugglers. He said he was shocked that Gush Katif residents would be involved in helping anyone get around the security forces' attempts to enforce the closure at such a sensitive time. (Iim)

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Radical Filipino group linked to Mideast

MANILA (AP) — Islamic rebels who raided a southern Philippine town belong to a radical network that extends from Afghanistan to the US, the government claims.

It also links the shadowy Abu Sayyaf group to organizations that have plotted subversion throughout the Mideast.

Corroborating all the claims about Abu Sayyaf, which killed 53 people in an attack on the town of Ipil last week, is impossible. But information suggests a Filipino connection to Middle East extremism.

Last December, for example, a defendant in a terrorist trial in Jordan said he traveled to the Philippines in 1991 to receive money to finance bombings and assassinations in Jordan.

The Philippines is becoming a

center "for internationally oriented groups who want to die for Islam," said Rick Fisher, an analyst for the conservative Heritage Foundation in Washington.

Abu Sayyaf, organized around 1991 by Aburajak Abubakar Janjani, once was regarded as a small group of young bandits who bombed, kidnapped and killed Christians in the southern Philippines.

But Interior Secretary Rafael Alunan said Abu Sayyaf — "Father of the Executioner" — has become the Philippine chapter of "Harakat al-Islamiya" ("Islamic Movement"), which he said was founded recently in Libya.

Harakat-e-Islami, the Dari language version of the same name, was one of the leading Moslem groups during the 1980-1989 war

with the former Soviet Union. It lost its clout after splitting over religious differences.

Manila's view of Abu Sayyaf began to change after Jan. 6, when security guards responding to a fire in a Manila apartment found bomb equipment, American airline schedules and computer diskettes.

American investigators lifted fingerprints of Ramzi Yousef, alleged mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

After the raid, police announced they had uncovered a plot to kill Pope John Paul II, who visited Manila later in January, and to blow up American airliners over the Pacific.

The Federal Aviation Administration imposed stringent security still in effect for US-Pacific

flights.

Evidence uncovered in the apartment led authorities to re-examine the Dec. 11 bombing of a Philippine Airlines jet during a flight from Cebu to Tokyo. The plane landed safely on Okinawa but one Japanese was killed.

The Associated Press had received an anonymous call claiming responsibility in the name of Abu Sayyaf, but police dismissed the claim then, saying the group lacked such technical expertise.

Last month, however, police charged Yousef with the bombing and called it a rehearsal for attacks on US flights.

Much of the government's information on Abu Sayyaf comes from two former leaders apprehended after the January raid — Abu Sayyaf co-founder Edwin

Angeles and operations chief Jo-venal Bruno.

Angeles told police that Abu Sayyaf recruits are routinely sent to Pakistan and Afghanistan for religious and military training. He also claimed Yousef had trained Abu Sayyaf members.

Based on information from the two, police raided a suburban Kalookan apartment on April 1, arrested six Arabs and found weapons, explosives and cassette tapes of sermons of Egyptian blind Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman, on trial in New York for the 1993 bombing.

The sheik is the suspected spiritual leader of Egypt's most radical Moslem group, al-Gamaa al-Islamiyya.

The six denied any involvement in terrorism.

Troops block aid to Chechen town; massacre alleged

SEKNOVODSK (Reuters) — Russian troops blocked humanitarian aid to a captured Chechen rebel stronghold for a fourth consecutive day yesterday and a human rights campaigner accused them of genocide against civilians there.

Alexander Guryanov, an activist who works for Sergei Kovalev, head of the Russian parliament's human rights commission, said his group had compiled a list of 500 people missing in Samashki, where he believed Russians had staged a "massacre".

There was no immediate comment from the Russian side but refugees and a local official spoke of a huge loss of civilian life in Samashki at the hands of Russian forces. The reports could not be independently confirmed.

International and Russian Red Cross vehicles carrying medical supplies were turned back at a Russian military checkpoint only 2 km from Samashki.

The town was captured on Saturday by Russian forces fighting separatist rebels loyal to Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev.

Guryanov said: "The Russian

army has turned its guns against civilians in a town under siege. This is nothing less than a genocide and I say that in front of these men." He gestured toward 10 Russian soldiers at the last checkpoint into the town, who grew nervous as he spoke.

"I have my orders. I'm just a military man," said a Russian commander at the checkpoint when asked why he would not allow humanitarian aid into Samashki. Journalists were also prevented from entering.

Jean-Paul Corboz, a field coordinator for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), told reporters he was "suspicious" about why the Russians would not allow humanitarian aid to reach the town.

"Officially, I can only say what I have seen. But I am suspicious because we cannot enter the town," he said. His organization has the permission of the Russian defense ministry to operate anywhere in Chechnya.

Russian soldiers approved entry only to a group of elderly Chechen women who said they were going to bury their dead.

Comedians elected to run Tokyo, Osaka

TOKYO (AP) — Former comedians have been elected to run Japan's two biggest cities, and for the nation's mainstream politicians that's anything but funny.

The stunning victories of Yukio Aoshima and "Knock" Yokoyama in elections for the governorships of Tokyo and Osaka were likened yesterday to a political earthquake, and could bode ill for big party incumbents in upcoming national elections.

"We must take this result very seriously," Prime Minister Tomichi Murayama said yesterday of polls which also included races for 11 other local governments.

The races had the added significance of being the first round of important polls held since Murayama took office last June and were seen by many as an test of what may lie ahead for parliamentary elections this summer.

"People have lost faith in political parties," Yokoyama said. "This is a sign of the times."

Front-page headline in major dailies yesterday put it even more succinctly. "City Hall — Magnitude 7," said one. "Voters Reject Established Parties," said another.

Voter disgust toward politics has been growing for several years following a string of bribery and corruption scandals that led to the ouster of the long-ruling Liberal Democrats in 1993.

The Liberal Democrats returned to power last year in a coalition with the Socialists, but that coalition has frequently been criticized as fragile and unable to exert strong, unified leadership.

In the Tokyo and Osaka races, alignment with that coalition was the kiss of death.

Aoyama, who campaigned as an independent on a strongly anti-establishment platform, trounced Nobuo Ishihara, a respected veteran bureaucrat who had the coalition's backing.

Yokoyama, also an independent, overcame Takuya Hirano, a top bureaucrat who entered the race late but with the backing of all major parties in the central government's ruling coalition and of opposition parties as well.



'Knock' Yokoyama dances in a tutu during his comedy sketch in 1973. The former comedian was elected governor of Osaka on Sunday, beating out rivals who were backed by the major parties. (AP)

Russians pummel Tajiks

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian helicopter gunships fired at Tajik opposition positions along the Tajik-Afghan border yesterday, the fourth straight day of fighting.

The missile strikes, reported by the ITAR-Tass news agency, were aimed at militants trying to seize a border post at Dushanbe. The report did not say whether there were casualties.

Overnight, Russian border guards killed nine Tajik rebels who tried to storm the post, said Anatoly Prokopyev, a Border Guard spokesman in Moscow.

At least 43 people have been killed since fighting broke out Friday. It has been the bloodiest few days in months along the mountainous border in Central Asia, where Russian guards are helping Tajik troops fight the Moslem rebels.

Also yesterday, a truck full of Russian border guards hit a mine planted by rebel forces at another border checkpoint, ITAR-Tass said. It said there were no casualties.

And the Tajik rebels bombed a strategic road leading out of the border city of Khorog, effectively blockading Russian forces there, Prokopyev said.

At a meeting in the capital, Dushanbe, Tajikistan's government called the border situation "critical" and appealed for help from the UN and CIS.

Col. Gen. Valery Patrikeyev, commander of the CIS peacekeepers, said the conflict could only end through negotiations.

Robert McNamara speaks out on Vietnam: 'We were wrong'

NEW YORK (AP) — At several points between 1963 and 1967, the US could and should have withdrawn from Vietnam, but a misguided administration failed to end a conflict that took 58,000 US lives, former defense secretary Robert McNamara says.

In a sharply self-critical recounting, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*, (Times Books), McNamara takes

much of the blame for the flawed policy.

The autobiography, to be released this week, describes a government ignorant of Vietnamese history and culture that failed to consider the political, military, financial and human costs of deepening involvement.

"Although we sought to do the right thing — and believed we were doing the right thing — in my

judgment, hindsight proves us wrong," writes McNamara, who served as defense secretary under John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson.

"We viewed the people and leaders of South Vietnam in terms of our own experience," McNamara concludes. "We totally misjudged the political forces within the country."

In the book, McNamara, one

of JFK's "best and brightest," breaks three decades of silence over his role in the war, revealing publicly the depth of his regrets. During those years, he says, he took on more "personal responsibility" for the conflict, which "ultimately led people to call Vietnam 'McNamara's War.'"

The memoir says there were five junctures between November 1963 and December 1967

when the US had the ability to end and should have pulled out.

Among them, McNamara says North Vietnam made "a very specific peace offer" in 1966 but withdrew it after Washington went ahead with bombing raids that had been delayed by bad weather. Johnson feared re-scheduling the raids "would be interpreted as weakness," McNamara wrote.

Message in bottle travels 10,000 km

CHINO, California (AP) — Amy Takeuchi didn't expect much to come of her letter. After all, she put it in a glass bottle and dropped it in the Pacific Ocean.

Although the note didn't travel fast, it traveled far. Nearly three years later, Amy got a reply from a 7-year-old boy in Micronesia in the Western Pacific Ocean. The nation of 607 islands is about 10,000 km from Dana Point, southwest of Los Angeles, where Amy tossed her bottled message into the surf.

"I was surprised," the 12-year-old said. "I thought no one was ever going to find it, or if someone did, it would only be in Dana Point."

Amy's new pen pal is Loyola Mallamai, whose airmail letter was postmarked March 17. "Greetings from the island of Mogmog," Loyola wrote with the help of his mother. "I found your letter, which drifted from California to Chino to the island of Song, last weekend."

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Fujimori crushes Perez de Cuellar in Peruvian elections

LIMA (AP) - President Alberto Fujimori, credited with virtually defeating South America's bloodiest rebel movement, won a second term in Peru's first national elections free of guerrilla violence in more than a decade.

According to unofficial results, Fujimori won a landslide victory Sunday with at least 60 percent of the vote, beating out 13 other candidates.

The elections board said yesterday that with 16 percent of the votes counted, Fujimori had 65 percent. His nearest challenger, Javier Perez de Cuellar, was second with 22 percent.

Fujimori, 56, said he planned to strengthen what he had already accomplished, including free-market reforms and the guerrilla crackdown.

"That means defeating inflation once and for all, completely defeating the violence and continuing the economic growth," he said.

Perez de Cuellar, the former UN secretary-general, had based his campaign on creating jobs and eliminating poverty.

Exit polls by Peru's three leading polling companies gave the president 60 percent to 64 percent of the vote, while Perez de Cuellar had 20 percent to 23 percent. None of the other candidates had more than 4 percent.

Since his election in 1990 as a dark-horse candidate, Fujimori has put the brakes on inflation that once topped 7,500 percent but was 15 percent last year. He

also nearly wiped out the Shining Path, the ruthless Maoist rebel movement that had terrified the country since 1980 and whose bombings and threats had marred past elections. No rebel-related violence was reported Sunday.

Many of Fujimori's achievements came after 1992, when he closed Congress and the courts - claiming they were obstructing - and began ruling with dictatorial powers. A new Congress later wrote a constitution that allowed him to run for a second successive term, an unusual provision in Latin America.

Fujimori apparently was unhurt by a messy breakup last year with his wife, Susana Higuchi, who tried unsuccessfully to launch her own presidential bid, and by the recent border conflict with Ecuador, in which Peru took the heavier losses.

Voters clearly gave short shrift to allegations of fraud late last week when police raided a house in the interior of the country and found people marking ballots for Fujimori and other candidates.

"I believe it's a lie. It's a political trick so that the people wouldn't vote for him," Fujimori supporter Maria Marquez said as she waited in line in a working-class Lima neighborhood to vote. Officials said the ballot-markers weren't connected to any party and apparently wanted to sell the ballots.

The president may also have won a clear majority in the 120-member unicameral Congress.

UK sleaze storm gathers steam

LONDON (Reuters) - Prime Minister John Major yesterday expressed support for a senior cabinet colleague under fire for his Arab business dealings in the latest round of sleaze allegations to hit the beleaguered British government.

Government officials said Major had "full confidence" in Jonathan Aitken, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, who is the target of a potentially damaging TV documentary that was scheduled to be screened last night.

The program alleges Aitken unsuccessfully tried to arrange gifts for a sheikh visiting Britain, accepted gifts and failed to declare his membership of the board of a Lebanese-owned arms company.

Aitken, who got into political hot water last year over his friendships with other leading Arab businessmen, denies the allegations and called the program a "character assassination plot."

He said he was proud of his business links with the Saudis, saying they were good for British exports and investments.

The furor came a day after another Conservative MP, Richard Spring, resigned as a ministerial aide following newspaper tales of a "three-in-a-bed sex romp."

Spring was the 17th Conserva-

tive politician to have departed under a cloud since Major took office three years ago.

The renewed attack on Aitken was potentially far more serious and the documentary was expected to be screened despite his vigorous protests.

Bad behavior, vicious infighting over Europe and repeated assaults on Major's leadership qualities have sent the government plunging 35 points behind the Labor Party in opinion polls.

Lord Jeffrey Archer, a former deputy chairman of the Conservative Party, warned yesterday of defeat at the next election, which must be held by April 1997.

"I believe that if we go on quarrelling with ourselves in public and we appear on radio and television fighting each other and not the Labor Party, we will lose (the next election) and we will lose badly and we will deserve to lose," Archer told BBC radio. "We must show some unity and get behind the prime minister."

The Conservatives were thrashed at local council elections in Scotland last week and the government is bracing itself for what threatens to be further dismal results for party candidates in next month's English and Welsh council elections.

Iraq urges Turkey to halt talks with Kurdish rebels

BAGHDAD (Reuters) - Iraq said yesterday Ankara would jeopardize its relations with Baghdad if it continued talks with Iraqi Kurdish rebel leaders on the situation in northern Iraq.

Iraqi parliament denounced the Turkish incursion into northern Iraq as an invasion and demanded that Ankara pull out its troops immediately.

Turkey has sent 32,000 troops into northern Iraq in a drive against separatist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) rebels.

Ankara is negotiating with Massoud Barzani, leader of Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) of Iraq, on means to prevent PKK from using the area to attack targets inside Turkey.

"The National Assembly requests that the Turkish government withdraw its military troops from northern Iraq immediately and stop dealing with the treasonous and outlaw Kurdish gangs," the parliament said in a statement.

The statement, carried by the

official Iraqi News Agency, said the presence of Turkish troops on Iraqi territory was "a flagrant violation of good-neighborly relations."

Iraq's ruling Baath party newspaper al-Thawra said Turkey risked losing its trading ties with Iraq and its own security if it did not put an end to contacts with rebel leaders.

"Turkey has relied in this abnormal step on a fragile wall comprising a heterogeneous terrorist group torn by extortion, differences and personal interests," it said in a commentary.

Iraq views the Turkish incursion as a step undermining its authority over the region which is controlled by Iraqi Kurdish rebels.

The KDP and its rival the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) have declared a temporary ceasefire after four months of fighting which killed hundreds of people and virtually destroyed the local Kurdish administration they ran together.

Man kills himself after flubbing lottery

LONDON (Reuters) - A man killed himself after missing out on an £8 million (NIS 39 million) lottery jackpot by forgetting to pay his weekly stake, police said yesterday.

Tim O'Brien, a father of two, had picked the same numbers every week since the British National Lottery began last year.

Realizing he had forgotten to

renew his weekly stake, O'Brien went up to the attic of his house in Liverpool and shot himself.

"We are not looking for anyone else in connection with the man's death," a police spokesman said.

"We are all devastated. It is absolutely tragic someone should take their life over the lottery," a spokeswoman for lottery organizers said.

מקדחן האשכול

UN slams Serbs over Sarajevo shelling

SARAJEVO (Reuters) - NATO jets roared over Sarajevo and the UN commander protested to the Bosnian Serbs yesterday after mortar fire killed and injured civilians.

"It does seem that the Bosnian Serbs are not looking for military targets and are in a cowardly fashion trying to harass the people of this city," said UN spokesman Alexander Ivanko. "I have to admit that yesterday the UN failed to deter an attack on the city."

Doctors at the city's Kosevo hospital said three people were killed, including a 15-year-old girl, and at least seven were injured, when 12 mortar rounds hit Sarajevo on Sunday.

In a statement, the United Nations commander in Bosnia, Lieutenant General Rupert Smith, said he had issued a formal protest to the Bosnian Serb leadership and ordered NATO jets to fly over the city marking targets for possible retaliatory air strikes.

UN commanders have become increasingly reluctant to use their powers to order the bombing of Bosnian Serb forces attacking Moslem civilian areas, fearful of peacekeepers being taken hostage and suffering reprisals.

Bosnian Serb attacks on UN-declared "safe areas" like Sarajevo have increased dramatically in the last weeks in the wake of a twin-pronged Bosnian government army offensive that blew apart a four-month truce and won strategic ground.

British Prime Minister John Major called on the government and the Bosnian Serbs to respect the crumbling ceasefire, due to expire in three weeks and which major power peace negotiators want both sides to extend.

Officials from the Contact Group - Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the US - are due in Balkan capitals to push for a truce extension and offer Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic a suspension of sanctions on Belgrade in return for recognizing

Bosnia and Croatia.

The Contact Group believes Milosevic's recognition of his neighbors independence will further isolate the Bosnian Serbs and pressure them to accept a peace plan dividing Bosnia roughly in half that they have steadfastly refused.

The Bosnian government says it must keep up military pressure on the Serbs to force them to trade some of the 70 percent of the country they hold as part of a peace deal.

Bob Dole begins third White House bid

TOPEKA, Kansas (AP) - Offering himself as "tempered by adversity, seasoned by experience," Sen. Bob Dole launched his third presidential campaign yesterday vowing to cut taxes, balance the budget and "lead America back to her place in the sun."

Dole, the Senate majority leader and early Republican front-runner, pledged to shift authority over schools, welfare and other issues back to the states.

"My mandate as president would be to rein in the federal government in order to set free the spirit of the American people; to reconnect our government in Washington with the common sense values of our

citizens; and to reassert America's interest wherever and whenever they are challenged around the world," Dole said, speaking at a rally moved indoors because of cold and rain.

Only three times in history have sitting senators won the White House. And Dole, now 71, will be 73 by the time the 1996 election rolls around, an age at which only Ronald Reagan has been elected president, in his case to a second term. But Dole, one of the most enduring, familiar and adaptable figures in recent American political history, opened his campaign with an optimistic spirit.

"My friends, I have the experience,"

Dole said. "I've been tested, tested in many ways. I am not afraid to lead and I know the way."

Dole is seeking to dispel any doubts that the new House Republican policy - and perhaps his candidacy - would be derailed in the Senate. He eagerly embraced the agenda that helped Republicans to their stunning success in last year's elections: a balanced budget amendment, a line-item veto and welfare reform, all under the umbrella of dramatically shrinking Washington's power and restoring more authority to states and communities.

Dole never mentioned his Republican rivals, but heaped scorn on the man he

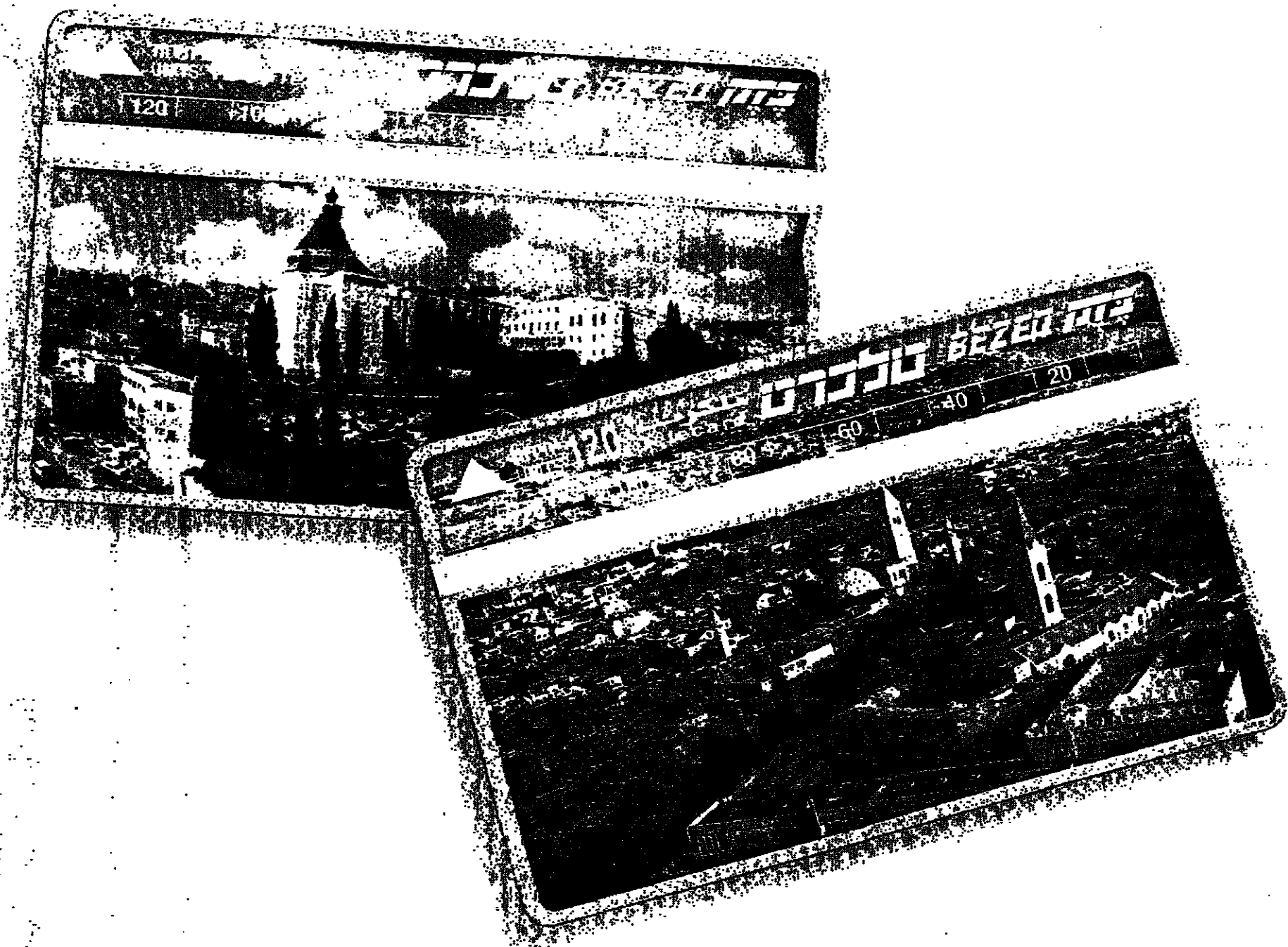
hopes to evict from the White House - Democratic President Bill Clinton.

After being elected on a promise of bold change in 1992, Dole said Clinton now was fighting at every turn to block the bolder change voters demanded last year when they gave Republicans control of Congress for the first time in four decades.

And, on the global stage, Dole said Clinton has been far too willing to put US interests second to those of the United Nations.

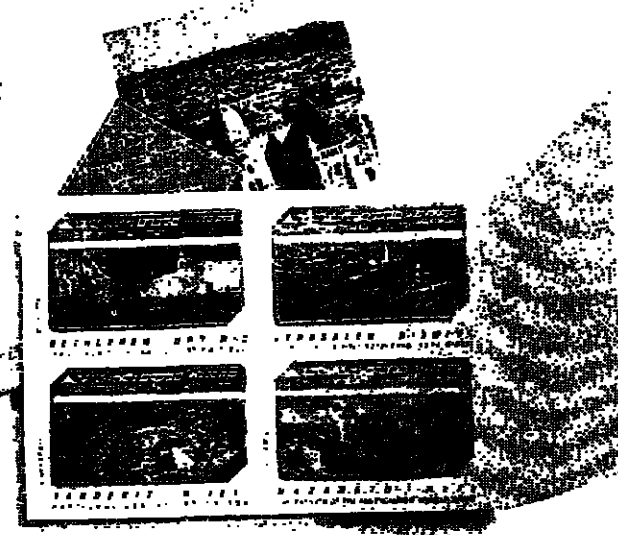
"When we take our revolution to the White House in 1996, we will vow that American policies will be determined by us, not by the United Nations," he said.

PILGRIMAGE SITES IN THE HOLY LAND



A New Series of Telecards

Bezeq presents a new series of telecards - Christian pilgrim sites - prepared in cooperation with the Israel Government Tourist Corporation. There are four cards in the series, bearing pictures of Christian pilgrim sites - some of the Holy Land's most beautiful. A delightful gift for collectors,



Israelis and tourists, who appreciate the country's beautiful sights. The pilgrim series is of four cards, each containing 120 call units. The cards cost NIS 49.50 each (incl. VAT). Special gift packaging costs NIS 200 (incl. VAT) - ask for the four telecards in the colour presentation set.

A Telecard in Every Pocket



Special presentation sets are available only at the following post offices: JERUSALEM - 237 Jaffa St. (near the Jlm. Gate Hotel); David's Tower (near the Jaffa Gate); Beit Hakermel, 22 Beit Hakermel St.; 2 Saladin St. (near Herod's Gate); Hadassah Hospital, Ein Kerem. TEL AVIV - 108 Ibn Gvirol St.; Jaffa, 12 Sd. Yerushalayim; Mikveh Yisrael, 7 Mikveh Yisrael St.; Shalom Mayer Tower, 9 Ahad Ha'am St. HAIFA - Hanavi'im, 22 Hanavi'im St.; Shikmona, 19 Pal-Yam St.; Mercat Hacarmel, 9 Sd. Wedgewood. BEN-GURION AIRPORT. NETANYA - Central Post Office, Ha'atzma'ut St. NAHARIYA - 40 Hagan'aton St. TIBERIAS - Independence Sq. NAZARETH - Moscoviya Building. OLD ACRE - 13 Al-Gazer St. ASHDOD - 7 Rogosin St. ASHKELON - 18 Herzl St. BEERSHEBA - 9 Sd. Hanessi'im. ARAD - 35 Ben-Ya'ir St. EILAT - Sd. Hazemarim, Kanyon Ha'adom.

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Arafat's moment of truth

A few weeks before the breakthrough in the Oslo talks in 1993, Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin prepared the Foreign Ministry staff for the change in Israel's policy on the PLO. There is no alternative to negotiating with Yasser Arafat, he said. He is the only Palestinian who is an international "household name," the only leader accepted by a majority of the Palestinian people, and the only one who could sell them the idea of peace with Israel.

There was some logic to this contention, even though it was clear at the time that the PLO was at the nadir of its popularity, and that in the territories Arafat was becoming an object of derision and resentment rather than adulation. Yet the simple fact was that no other Palestinian leader could claim to represent the Palestinian people. The government, claiming that the Palestinian delegation to the Washington talks could not make tough decisions, concluded that only Arafat could make peace.

Even then it was clear that large segments of the Palestinian population did not accept Arafat's authority. But it was assumed that the "rejectionists," whether the Islamic groups or the PLO radicals, would either fall into line or be subdued by Arafat's forces. "Why should we chase the Hamas terrorists," asked Foreign Minister Shimon Peres at the time. "Let the PLO do it."

To ensure Arafat's ability to impose his will, Israel promised him a large, well-equipped army, euphemistically described as a police force. And within less than a year this army, intended to be limited to 9,000 troops, became a serious force, now numbering anywhere between 17,000 and 25,000 amply equipped soldiers.

In addition, Arafat has built several secret police apparatuses, presumably to control subversive activity which may undermine the "peace process." Recently he also revived the "Fatah Hawks," whose specialty - as a government minister gleefully told the *Jerusalem Post* recently - is to fight the Hamas.

Yet the plain fact is that most of the energies of these armed forces are directed against "collaborators" - Palestinians who have thrown their lot in with Israel. These Israeli allies, including many who still live in areas officially under Israeli control, have been tortured, incarcerated and executed by Arafat's forces.

The "rejectionists," on the other hand, have been mostly left alone. True, their leaders do get arrested after every major terrorist strike, but the vast majority are released within a few days. Only those who threaten Arafat's rule stay in jail. In the 11 months of Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho, none of the Islamic militias has been disarmed, and none of the terrorists,

including those known to have murdered Israelis, has been arrested. The PA claims that it has prevented terrorist strikes against Israel, but in the absence of arrests, trials and punishments, such claims are less than convincing.

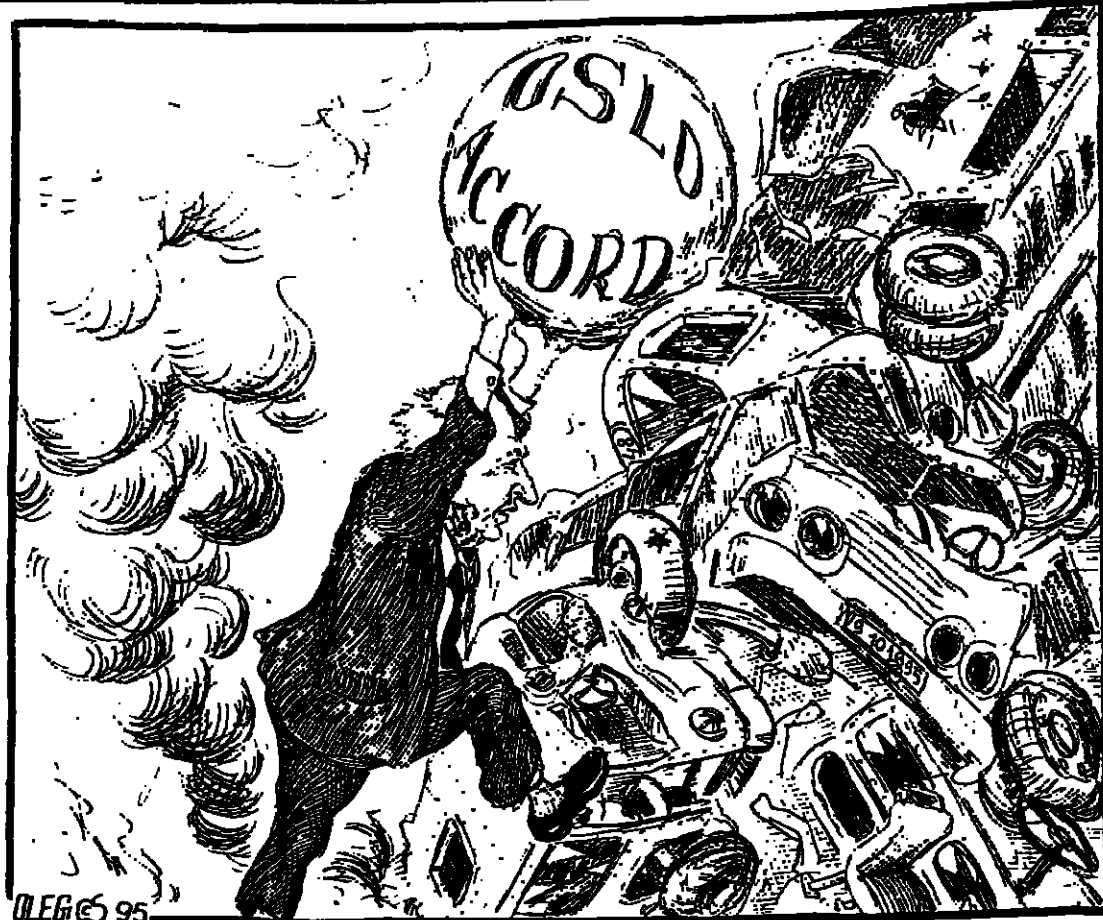
Now both Israel and the United States have concluded that there can be no "progress" in the process (by which they mean Israeli withdrawal from Arab population centers, Palestinian elections, and the release of terrorist prisoners) unless Arafat takes real steps against the terrorists. He is not expected to eradicate terrorism, but to arrest terrorist leaders, disarm their militias and outlaw them.

To disabuse him of the notion that terrorism will prompt Israel to withdraw faster, he is being told that he is miscalculating the Israeli mood. True, Israel did yield to terrorist pressure when it withdrew from Lebanon, and it did agree to recognize the PLO and withdraw from the territories as a result of intifada terrorism. But now only a minority in the government, and an even smaller minority in the nation, advocate withdrawal under terrorist fire. The one person who counts, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, has in effect declared a moratorium on further "progress" until Arafat undertakes to fight terrorism.

The moment of truth has arrived, the moment in which the wisdom of negotiating with Arafat is being put to the test. Arafat's forces are certainly superior to those of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad. He is militarily capable of declaring war on them and winning. But if past conduct is any indication, he will do only a little more than he has done in the past in an effort to placate Israel and the US.

This is not because Arafat has never fought other Palestinians - he has done so with fierce determination in Lebanon - but because he has assiduously nurtured the Palestinian faith in the armed struggle. He knows what everyone who watches television knows: that the Palestinians' greatest heroes today are the "martyrs" who sacrifice themselves by killing Jews. Palestinians may sympathize with Arafat's need to pay lip service to regret, shock and even the condemnation of terrorists. They will not countenance his fighting them.

Not only Beilin, but Peres and the whole group of Oslo negotiators hoped that Arafat would be transformed by the opportunity presented by peace. Some in the peace camp freely compared him to Ben-Gurion. Peres himself wrote in his current book, "I do believe the Palestinians could potentially become the first truly democratic society." The advent of such a society among the Palestinians is indeed the first requisite of peace. But as long as Arafat is the Palestinian leader, there will be neither democracy for Palestinians nor peace for Israel.



ISRAEL'S SISYPHUS

Tradition vs. Thailand

THE IDF has announced, very late in the day, that there has been a perceptible downsizing in enlistment for combat units. Yitzhak Rabin told the Knesset that the percentage of volunteers has dropped from 32 to 30 percent.

The wonder isn't that this is happening, but that one third of young people are still choosing to train as pilots and paratroopers, or opting for the elite reconnaissance unit.

The fall had to come. It is an inevitable result of the systematic erosion of every value we possess. At school and at home, the average youngster learns that his top priority is self-fulfillment. Someone who wants to play music will enlist in the General Staff's Shekem and leave the sweat, the mud and doing night guard duty to others. The peak of success in Israel today is spinning the wheel of fortune and winning prizes.

The rot set in when pleasure began to take precedence over social obligation. Then historical truths got wiped out. The story went round that no marshes were dried up in the Jezreel valley. The new Bolsheviks even forbade the Book of Joshua to be taught in Labor Movement high schools. David Ben-Gurion and Yigal Alon are turning in their graves, and Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres stand silent at the helm of government.

The truth? Yosef Trumpeldor cursed his fate as he was dying, saying (as the doctor who was called in from Metulla testified), that if one had to die, then it ought to be in the Land of Israel. Yosef Hayim Brenner polished up this simple utterance, rendering it as "It is good to die for our country."

The fashionable line is that Trumpeldor simply let out a curse in Russian. In any case, everyone's fed up with the model of Tel Hai.

The day before his execution, Dov Gruner wrote to IZL com-

DAN MARGALIT

mander Menachem Begin that he wouldn't have taken a different course, even if he had known his fate in advance. This heroic attitude has also been dissected in legalistic argument. After all, it's more interesting to say that Hanna Szenes's mission to Hungary was a scandal. Soon enough,

The 'best and brightest' volunteer for combat units. Or do they?

she'll be condemned. Just as long as not a shred of the myth remains.

When there is no tradition, there are fewer volunteers. Last week, Newt Gingrich, leader of the Republican majority in the US Senate, bemoaned the state of American society, calling for more effort and fewer excuses.

Israel has lost sight of this message.

Other layers, desirable in themselves, are part of this trend: the feeling that peace is on the horizon, and that in the future swords will be beaten into ploughshares; and the general openness - which is most useful - to Western lifestyles.

But if the ultimate objectives are the beaches of California and the mysteries of Thailand, who will be prepared to give his all in the Lebanon mud?

THE DAMAGE to volunteerism is actually worse than Rabin's figures suggest, because the drop has been especially great in those sectors of society that have borne the brunt of the country's security for decades. Even among the volunteers some give up quickly and drop out.

If the number of volunteers still exceeds demand, it is because, fortunately, Sephardic

communities are gradually taking up their rightful place in society, and because the knitted kippawearers are streaming to the combat units.

Ehud Barak ignored the general reduction in motivation for three years. When asked, he claimed it didn't exist. Someone once asked why Defense Minister Rabin didn't do anything to investigate the phenomenon among the established, well-heeled centers of population. That's impossible, was the answer, the parents of these young people belong to the prime minister's own social circle.

If this process continues, it is liable to lead to social decline. The center of gravity in the IDF will shift to the poor, as happened in the US army, which overflowed with the poor and minority groups until recent administrations made an attempt to balance it. How successfully isn't yet clear.

It isn't yet an open wound, since the process is slow. The percentage of volunteers is still high, and if peace comes, before motivation ebbs away, nothing very terrible will happen.

But Rabin believes that peace can be firmly founded only on a strong IDF, one which can draw on huge numbers of volunteers to fill the long ranks of the paratroopers, the tank corps, and the Golani Brigade.

To reverse the trend, it isn't enough for Rabin and incoming Chief of Staff Amnon Shahak to be truthful with the public. They will need the moral strength to initiate an information campaign which drives home - out of internal conviction - what was once an old slogan: "The best and brightest for the air force." They will need to adapt it to the units in question, and give it a Nineties' slant. Only they know why they haven't got round to it yet.

(Courtesy of Ha'aretz)

An eye-opener in Gaza

DAVID ELIEZRIE

DEATH missed me by a few moments on Sunday, when a bomb killed six people in the Gaza Strip.

I had come to Israel for a few days. Having some free time, I headed south to visit old friends in Neveh Dekalim, a settlement in Gush Katif, not far from Kfar Darom. I was anticipating a pleasant afternoon of reminiscences, and maybe some sun at the local beach.

The inspiration to visit Gaza had come from Meretz's Yossi Sarid. On Friday, he had called for the dismantling of Gaza settlements. I decided that, as a personal protest, I would visit my friends and give them some moral support.

Arriving at the Kissufim military checkpoint at the entrance to the Strip, I asked for an escort. The officer in charge told me that the group of soldiers standing by was waiting to accompany the bus that was due to arrive at any moment.

Suddenly, a local settler drove up and offered to guide me into the Strip. Following him in my rented car, we turned left onto the main Gaza artery. The bus arrived minutes later, and turned right toward Kfar Darom. A suicide bomber was waiting for it.

I drove on to Neveh Dekalim. After I had greeted my friends, we began to hear ambulance sirens. Slowly, news of the bombing trickled in. My friend's eight-year-old

son remarked: "What a shame that the explosion has ruined your visit."

I was taken aback by his matter-of-fact tone. Then I realized that, for him, death is very much a part of everyday life. His father killed a terrorist in the midst of an attack on their settlement last year. His grandfather fell on the Suez front just after the Six Day War.

I DROVE back to the site of the tragedy, and spent many hours there. I witnessed the pandemonium, the pain and sorrow. Soldiers stood guard, bewildered at the knowledge that their friends lay dead and wounded.

Most striking of all was the reaction of Arabs. Some hours after the bombing, buses began to be routed around the site, passing a military checkpoint just down the road.

As the buses, filled with Arab passengers, went by, they shouted enthusiastically from the windows. They held up fingers in a V sign. Not 100 meters from the bus filled with death, local Arabs gathered behind a fence celebrating.

The day of the bombing, the prime minister reiterated the government line, that there are two kinds of Palestinians: the extremists who want to "derail" the peace

process, and the others, who want to turn over a new page in relations with Israel.

For those of us who stood at that scene of death and injury, there was only one kind of Arab, the kind that turned a day of murder into a festival.

This reaction poses a serious question about peace with the Palestinians.

It isn't just the PLO's failure to control terrorism, or the mini-police state that has been created in Gaza and Jericho. Nor is it Yasser Arafat's terrorist background.

The real question is: Are the Palestinians seriously ready for peace? Have they abandoned their old agenda, or have they just changed their tactics? Is their step-by-step plan as firm as ever, with Gaza and Jericho first, then the rest of the West Bank serving as a springboard for further confrontation with Israel?

Had the reaction of the Arabs I saw in Gaza on Sunday been one of regret and sorrow, I might have thought that we have entered a new era.

But the open joy on their faces told me otherwise. It told me that Arab tactics may have changed, but their goals remain the same.

The writer, a rabbi in Yorba Linda, California, is currently visiting the country.

Worldly concerns

THEODORE STEINBERG

ABOUT 40 years ago Horace Kallen, an American professor of philosophy, wrote a book called *Secularism: the Will of God*.

Kallen's main point was that it is not a divine but a human responsibility to make the world a pleasant and habitable place.

Put differently, taking care of the world is a secular occupation. And this, according to Kallen, is how God wants it to be. I have always liked Kallen's idea.

Although I stand on the religious side of the spectrum, I have long felt respectful and friendly toward secularism - especially when it is not a hard-bitten ideology.

Surely there is a place where sane secularism and sane religious Judaism can meet

logical mirror-image of religious extremism.

Secularism means a serious focus on the worldly, mundane human side of things.

As such, it is not in inevitable conflict with religious Judaism and, in fact, the two are - or should be - partners in many areas.

Thanks primarily to secular sensibilities and advocacy, a host of important contemporary issues such as ecology, civic ethics, drug abuse and problems of road safety, to name just a few, have come to our attention. And these also owe something to religious values.

FOR EXAMPLE, the problems of reducing the carnage on Israel's roads will never be solved simply through better enforcement of traffic laws and the use of seat belts.

What is also needed is something that is more complicated yet, in the long run, more effective. It has to do with the way people think and feel about themselves and others when they get behind the wheel.

We do not have to search far to find such a perspective. It is there, in our own classical tradition, which is filled with wise, functional and humane values.

Two ideas which might serve as the foundation of our "rules of the road" are *kedushat ha-hayim*, respect for the sanctity of life, and *derech eretz*, which is usually translated as good manners, courtesy and generally ethical behavior.

These two concepts embody values that not only make good sense, but have the added benefit of having formed part of our common vocabulary and tradition for centuries.

While they do have religious connotations, one can hope that good ideas will be appreciated and utilized by open-minded secularists even when they originate in Jewish tradition.

Modern political Zionism is largely a secular achievement, and yet its roots irrefutably flow out of our classical religious sources.

Ironically, it is in some secular circles that Zionism is reported to have fallen on hard times, and we hear gleeful talk of a post-Zionist, and even a post-Jewish age.

Wouldn't it be terrific if the advocates of sane religious Judaism and sane secularism could join forces to renew and rehabilitate the national ideology which is sacred to both?

I don't think I am being naive.

I am convinced that there must be a meeting place between sensible, moderate secularism and equally sensible moderate Judaism, where each side respects and is willing to learn from the other.

I know this is possible because I have walked that road which combines the secular and the religious all my life.

The writer is a Conservative rabbi living in Jerusalem.

POSTSCRIPT I

THE HOST of a TV murder mystery show died on the street outside his Montreal home after being repeatedly stabbed.

Richard Niquette, 44, was a well-known actor whose last job was host of the *Murder and Mystery* program on an interactive TV channel. Viewers were invited to help solve a murder that was committed at the start of the show.

His murder is as yet unsolved.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PERSONAL PROTEST

Sir, - The majority of Israelis have anything from deep misgivings to outright hostility towards the "peace" process as it being implemented. This mass opposition arises from a diversity of fears and disappointments.

The tragedy of the situation is that we seem to be paralyzed in the face of events. It is left to a few groups to demonstrate for us all - the groups that are then desperately discredited by a government riding roughshod over the feelings of its people. Isolated protests and media outcries are not changing policy despite popular opposition. Is there a way of personal protest that has an immediate change in direction and give genuinely representative leaders the strength to implement a suspension and comprehensive review of the current "peace" process so that eventually a real peace can be achieved? I believe so.

If each and every one of those seeking a true and realistic peace would today and every day there-

after wear a green armband, the government and its visitors to our country would see the silent, peaceful but visible protest of the majority.

The Clintons, Gores and Christophers could not be prevented from seeing the seas of green reflecting our feelings. This form of protest lends itself to all the population - men and women, old and young. None need be excluded. It honors democracy and the law of the land. No government can arrest millions of its subjects for expression by means of modest dress. The only sacrifice needed is really a privilege - that of standing up and being counted for a just cause. Representative leaders would hopefully then give political effect to this common protest.

A uniform color of light green (tribute to efforts of Women in Green) would reflect the uniform desire for overhaul of the peace process that has so shocked us.

Y. SYMONDS
Jerusalem.

STUMBLING IN THE DARK

Sir, - The leaders of the Israeli government act like a playwright who has decided his play is reality. When will they stop long enough to listen to the Arabs?

The Arabs are quite honest. They hate Jews and will not live with them in peace on any level. As I read *The Jerusalem Post*, it seems that the voice of reason is Ariel Shar-

on's. I don't know why he sees so clearly and the rest of them are stumbling around unsure.

You may wish and pray for peace, but you are not going to have peace with these people until they are completely convinced that you are ready to fight, perhaps even eager to.

SHERWIN J. KADER
Shorewood, Wisconsin.

'LESE-MAJESTE'

Sir, - On March 28, I was invited to attend the address of H.M. Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands to the Knesset.

I regret to say that I was thoroughly embarrassed both as an Israeli resident and as a Dutch citizen by an almost complete lack of interest for this session by the government as well as many Knesset members. Only seven ministers were

present, including the prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs.

As the visit of royalty has nothing whatsoever to do with political views, I can only conclude that basic education in good manners would not be wasted on most of the members of our parliament.

A. COHEN
Yokne'am.

INCIDENT ON TEMPLE MOUNT

Sir, - I read your report of March 31 about the ejection of a group of Jews from the Temple Mount and their arrest. I was with a group of British tourists who witnessed the whole scene.

We saw a small group of women, who were violently set upon and physically abused by a group of men (who were told) were the Moslem guards of the Temple Mount. The women were forcibly carried to the doorway and then arrested.

What was most disturbing was that one of our group, who happened to photograph the whole incident, was picked out, manhandled to the exit and literally kicked out of the door by the same Moslem guards. At the same time, his camera was taken and only returned to him after the film had been ripped out. When he complained to the Israeli police on the Mount, he was told that there was nothing to be done about it, as they did not want to aggravate matters.

What was strange about this was that the same scene was photographed and filmed by at least 500 other tourists (including most of our group) and they were not subjected to the same violent "censorship."

If this is the way our Palestinian neighbors treat tourists, I am afraid they have a lot to learn.

B. MAYNARD
Jerusalem (Birmingham).

ART FEATURES

Sir, - Sitting in the sunshine on the balcony, I enjoyed reading Meir Ronnen's review of *Tail Ships* and the *Curry Sark* Races.

I'm not a fan-letter writer; these few lines are just to thank Mr. Ronnen for bringing back memories of being under sail as a teenager and - through his art features especially - for giving much-needed substance to the Post.

May be continue to go from strength to strength.

MIRIAM FLEISCHMAN
Nahariya.

Occasionally, one may even come to the far-fetched conclu-

BUSINESS & FINANCE

TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 1995

Brodet: Inflation will fall to 10% in '95

TREASURY director general David Brodet yesterday said he expects inflation will drop to 10 percent this year.

"We are very optimistic about inflation in 1995," he said. "We are confident we will be within the inflation target of 8%-11%. I believe inflation will be 10%."

Last year's target was 8%, but inflation actually reached 14.5%. Asked whether he was satisfied with interest rate levels, Brodet indirectly hinted he would be happy if the Bank of Israel would further lower rates.

"We hope the lower rate of inflation will be part of the consideration for fixing interest rates for 1995," he said.

The government will issue tradeable bonds abroad this year to test how foreign capital markets will receive those issues now

JOSE ROSENFELD

that the country has an official Standard & Poor's credit rating of BBB+.

Brodet noted that the country does not need to raise additional funds, but the issue would prepare the ground when such issues will be needed in the future.

Israel's financing needs are currently covered by \$2 billion in US loan guarantees a year, until the end of 1997.

After Pessah, the Treasury will determine the size of the issue, as well as pick the market and the investment bank to be responsible for the bond issue.

Brodet confirmed that the ministerial privatization committee had again approved the sale of Israel Shipyards to SKO-Car, and the Knesset Finance Committee

will consider again the government's request to sell the shipyards at the end of the week.

Brodet denied that Israel Chemicals' (ICL) foreign issue of 22% of its shares would be delayed. He said the issue will go ahead as scheduled in May.

Brodet justified the six-month delay of El Al's privatization as a way to give the government enough time to check out all the options so the sale succeeds.

Government revenues from privatization were approximately \$600m. in the first quarter, and the Treasury has budgeted \$1.5b. in revenues from the sale of state firms this year.

Brodet expects the sale of a controlling interest in Bank Hapoalim to bring in a significant portion of this year's privatization revenues.

THE trade deficit inched down 2.6 percent last month to \$848.9 million, as record high imports were partially offset by a 17% surge in exports, the Central Bureau of Statistics reported yesterday.

Exports rose to \$1.54 billion from \$1.32b. in February, while imports increased a more moderate 9.2% to \$2.39b. from \$2.19b. The bureau attributed the high import levels to the purchase of a freight plane and a rise in fuel purchases.

Seasonally adjusted figures — excluding ships, airplanes and diamonds — showed a drop in exports of 2% in the past quarter from the previous quarter.

Most of the decrease was concentrated in machinery, electronics and transportation vehicle

17% jump in exports keeps trade gap in check

JOSE ROSENFELD

equipment, quality control equipment and machinery exports decreased between 6% and 3%, while plastic and rubber exports rose 13%.

Similarly, electronic component, office equipment and computer exports increased 8%, metal products 5.5% and clothing and textiles 3%.

Diamond exports averaged \$333m. a month in the past quarter, a 1.4% rise, while agricultural exports increased 3%.

Consumer imports jumped 14%, compared with 6.5% in the previous quarter.

Non-durable imports rose 12%, while imports of cars went up 10% and electric appliances soared 22%.

Chemical, telecommunication

Production input imports, excluding diamonds and fuel, increased 8.5%.

Iron and steel imports shot up 32%, while non-ferrous metal imports rose 18%.

Cloth, thread, rubber and plastic imports increased between 13% and 11%, while electronic components, chemical products and raw material for paper production rose between 6% and 4%.

By contrast, wood and wood product imports fell 13% and raw food product imports fell 3%.

Investment goods imports — such as machinery, equipment, and vehicles — increased 7.5% in the past quarter, with vehicle imports diving 24%.

Fuel imports jumped 46% in the past quarter to \$570m.

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By contrast, wood and wood product imports fell 13% and raw food product imports fell 3%.

Investment goods imports — such as machinery, equipment, and vehicles — increased 7.5% in the past quarter, with vehicle imports diving 24%.

Fuel imports jumped 46% in the past quarter to \$570m.

State attorney opens probe of insurance companies

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

THE State Attorney's Office economic division is investigating suspicions that insurance companies have agreed among themselves not to compete with each other in several fields of activity.

The probe follows a complaint filed by the Kiryat Malachi city council with the Industry and Trade Ministry's anti-trust division.

Eli Dokraski, a member of the Kiryat Malachi city council, yesterday said the anti-trust division has given the state attorney information regarding alleged suspicions of a binding agreement among insurance companies insuring city councils.

"Dokraski's complaint was combined with an investigation of suspicions that insurance companies have reached binding agreements in several fields of activity," anti-trust division lawyer Asher Gushen said. "The Anti-Trust division's findings were transferred to the State Attorney Office's economic division, which will consider filing a charge sheet."

Rimon Ben-Shaul, chairman of the Insurance Companies Association, could not be reached for comment.

The episode started in July 1992, following the Kiryat Malachi municipality's publication of a tender to appoint a company to insure the city council.

The only company to participate in the tender was Migdal, which until then had insured the council for 27 years.

In a letter to the local council members, Ya'acov Yardani, Kiryat Malachi treasurer, said "Unfortunately the insurance companies have reached an agreement whereby they will not compete against each other on large insurance policies. For this reason, the existing insurance company [Migdal] is holding us captive."

Yardani added that Migdal's proposal was 256 percent higher than the existing insurance policy. In the complaint, which was submitted to the Anti-Trust division, the city council attacked the treasurer's letter and also a letter from attorney Yigal Sagi, the Local Authorities insurance adviser.

"Many of the recently published city council tenders have failed, since competing insurance companies did not submit bids," Sagi said. "The existing insurer was the only one to submit a bid."

Eurotunnel reports £387 million loss last year, says it's £8 billion in debt

LONDON (AP) — As the Channel Tunnel prepares for summer travelers, operators wonder whether the peak season will bring in enough money to keep bankers happy.

Eurotunnel said yesterday it lost £386.9 million last year on revenues of £30.6m.

More importantly, revenues were less than a quarter of what Eurotunnel had projected about a year ago when it tapped shareholders for £816m. to stay in business.

Eurotunnel has said a revenue shortfall was inevitable because the tunnel opened to the public many months late.

The company is £8 billion in debt. Interest charges are about £2m. a day, according to Graham Corbett, Eurotunnel's chief financial officer.

Eurotunnel grimly announced yesterday that the interest payments could wipe out the company if revenues don't pick up.

"Eurotunnel is at risk," co-chairmen Sir Alastair Morton and Patrick Ponsolle said in a statement. "In 1995, we may succeed or we may fail. Our debt service costs may overwhelm us."

That potentially could mean that somebody other than current shareholders would end up enjoying profits from the tunnel — if any — sometime in the next century.

In a news conference, Eurotunnel executives tried to paint a more optimistic picture, expressing surprise that the stock plunged as the company released its losses and revenue figures from 1994.



Co-chairman Sir Alastair Morton: Our debt service costs may overwhelm us.

(AP)

"Today's financial statement is not some kind of farewell note," Morton said in London. "We are not going bust."

In Paris, Ponsolle said Eurotunnel might try to issue bonds late in the year.

Some analysts predict Eurotunnel needs to be refinanced — perhaps by asking shareholders for more money.

This peak summer vacation season will be a crucial test for the tunnel, built at a cost of £10b.

and still working out the bugs.

The tunnel still has some cash on hand, and bankers have agreed to put up enough money to see the tunnel through the summer. After that, they are going to demand a progress report from Eurotunnel.

The tunnel has yet to operate at full capacity, and Eurotunnel said revenues had come up short through the end of the first quarter. This leaves Eurotunnel in a

precarious situation as it works to pay off bankers.

Investors responded to the news by dumping Eurotunnel stock. The shares dropped 10 percent in London, where they closed at 216 pence. The shares fell by 6.5 percent in Paris, to close at FR 17.40.

"If our analysts and our shareholders are worried when we confirmed we're at risk, which you already knew, then so be it," Morton told reporters.

La Nationale reports 60% drop in net profits

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

LA Nationale insurance yesterday reported a 60 percent drop in annual net profits to NIS 21.17 million from NIS 53.44m. in 1993.

As a result of the plunge in earnings, La Nationale managing director Moshe Pereg agreed to give up on half the annual bonus to which he is entitled as part of his work agreement with the company.

Pereg will receive a NIS 3.7m. bonus, instead of NIS 7.4m.

In reaction to the drop in the company's earnings, La Nationale shares plunged 8% on the stock exchange.

The drop in earnings was mainly due to the company's execution of several reinsurance trans-

actions, which led to a rise in purchasing costs and a growth in reinsurance companies' debts to La Nationale.

The decrease in profits also reflected NIS 41.4m. in redemptions.

Profits from the life insurance division more than halved to NIS 38.38m. from NIS 92.67m.

Total premiums from the life insurance sector increased to NIS 468m. from NIS 306m. Life insurance claims went up to NIS 127.5m. from NIS 58m.

Losses from elementary insurance increased to NIS 8.62m. from NIS 3.27m. in 1993. Premiums from the elementary insurance sector rose to NIS 45m. from NIS 32.5m.

Israel, China sign investment protection treaty

JOSE ROSENFELD

FINANCE Minister Avraham Shohat and Chinese Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Minister Wu Yi yesterday signed an investment protection treaty and an agreement to extend a \$150 million line of credit to Israeli companies investing in China, the Treasury reported.

Treasury officials have emphasized the importance of the treaty following the difficulties foreign investors have had with Chinese authorities.

The treaty protects investors from both countries against discrimination and acts that will decrease the value of their investments.

In addition, the treaty guarantees the right of investors to realize their investment at any time they desire.

Shohat also signed an unpre-

cedented protocol on financial cooperation between the two countries which will provide a \$150m. line of credit to Israeli companies investing in China through the Israel Foreign Trade Risk Insurance Corporation (IFTRIC).

The line of credit is essential to close deals in China, since investors must come armed with financing under preferential terms, Treasury officials said.

Investors will be eligible to use the line of credit for projects approved by both countries.

Wu Yi said the agreements will facilitate both countries' penetration of each other's markets and noted the great potential for investment in both countries.

Wu Yi is scheduled to visit here in September, when a joint Israel-China trade committee will meet.

Medina named Mizrahi chairman

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

FORMER Israel Chemicals chairman Victor Medina will be appointed United Mizrahi Bank chairman, the Ofer-Wertheim group announced yesterday.

Medina will take over at the next general meeting from Chaim Kubersky, who announced his plans to resign.

Mizrahi's owners, Muzi Wertheim and Yuli Ofer, said they will decide on a new general manager soon.

Mizrahi's current general man-

ager, David Blumberg, hopes to resign in September, but he said he will temporarily stay on if a candidate is not found.

Mizrahi is looking for candidates within its senior management and at other banks.

There have also been rumors that Mizrahi comptroller Reuven Adler has been proposed as a candidate. Others include Ehud Shapira, Bank Leumi's credit division head, and Avi Zeldman, head of banking at Leumi.

Profits fall at Elco Holdings

COMPANY RESULTS

RACHEL NEIMAN

ELCO Holdings reported a decline in annual net profits to NIS 84.9 million from NIS 97.3m. in 1993, while earnings per share fell to NIS 7.34 from NIS 6.74.

Revenues rose to NIS 1.5m. from NIS 1.2m.

The company, which owns Elco Industries (77 percent), Electra (63%), Electra Consumer Goods (80%) and Shekem (43%) experienced a NIS 29.9m. gain on investments last year.

Kvallm announced a drop in annual net profits to NIS 36.7m. from NIS 47.24m. in 1993, while earnings per share fell to NIS 2.06 from NIS 2.71. Annual revenues decreased to

NIS 283.28m. from NIS 321.8m.

Red Sea Hotels reported a drop in annual net profits to NIS 7.46m. from NIS 12m. in 1993, while earnings per share fell to NIS 0.42 from NIS 0.67.

Revenues went up to NIS 55.5m. from NIS 42.5m.

Sahar Insurance reported a net loss of NIS 1.8m., compared with a net gain of NIS 5.7m. in 1993.

Revenues on life insurance rose to NIS 16.6m. from NIS 16.1m. Losses on general insurance were NIS 7.2m., compared with a gain of NIS 4.5m. in 1993. Total revenues declined to NIS 9.3m. from NIS 20.7m.

Court approves JOEL nomination

RACHEL NEIMAN

THE Tel Aviv District Court yesterday approved JOEL chairman Joe Elmaliach's compromise solution on the nomination of his company's representative to Naphtha's board of directors.

Attorney Haim Indig will serve as JOEL's new representative.

Elmaliach's original nomination, Dani Toledano, was opposed by Naphtha.

The board filed a suit against Elmaliach on Friday, claiming Toledano's position as JOEL's deputy chairman would create a conflict of interest.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Bezek posts highest sales turnover in economy: Bezek registered the highest sales turnover, \$1.988 billion, among all companies operating in the economy last year, according to the Dun & Bradstreet (Israel) annual company ranking. The second largest company, in terms of sales turnover, was the OI Electric Corporation, with sales of \$1.828b., followed by OI Refineries, with sales volume of \$1.708b. Thruva was ranked fourth, with annual sales of \$1.554b., followed by Israel Aircraft Industries, which registered sales of \$1.447b.

The total sales turnover of the 10 leading companies represents about 33 percent of the accumulated sales turnover of the 200 leading firms. Sales for the 150 largest firms grew to \$23.9b. last year from \$20.7b. in 1993 and \$18.8b. in 1992.

IVS Holding to invest \$2.5m. in Orad: High Tech Systems IVS Holding will invest \$2.5 million in Orad subsidiary Orad High Tech Systems in return for a 25.1 percent outstanding share. IVS will also grant Orad a \$1m. loan. Following the investment, Orad will own 30% of Orad.

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Greeks square off in Final Four tonight

ZARAGOZA (Reuter) - Athens comes to Spain this week as Olympiakos and Panathinaikos, the colossi of Greek basketball, head the field in the European Club Champions Final Four.

The Greeks, who topped their respective final pools and enjoy a fanatical rivalry, lock horns in a potentially explosive semifinal tonight.

The winners take on either Real Madrid or Limoges, who get Europe's top basketball tournament under way in the other semifinal earlier today.

Olympiakos, which lost last year's final by a single basket to Joventut Badalona, is a narrow favorite to win the competition.

Olympiakos has an array of domestic and foreign talent but will rely on veteran NBA scorer Eddie Johnson on offense and George Sigalidis, back after breaking a leg, on defense.

If Olympiakos has an Achilles heel, it is against Limoges - a team it has never beaten in any European competition and to whom it lost twice during the season.

Panathinaikos, which finished third last year, has had to rebuild its team following the retirement

of the country's top player, Niki Gallis, earlier this season. Its title campaign has been headed by Montenegrin forward Zarko Paspalj and Greek national captain Panayiotis Yannakis.

Over 3,000 Greeks have made the trip west and Spanish police are taking no chances. More than 1,000 officers have been drafted into Zaragoza, where last week they had to deal with rioting soccer fans from Chelsea.

Real Madrid, runners-up in the Group A final pool, relies on the height of Lithuanian Arvidas Sabonis and the point-scoring of forward Joe Arlauskas. The coach is Zeljko Obradovic, seeking his third European triumph in four years, all with different clubs.

In 1992 he took Partizan Belgrade to the European title and last year coached Joventut Badalona to success.

When Obradovic missed out in 1993, it was Limoges which took the title, the first French team ever to do so.

They bring 1,200 fans across the Pyrenees and will be looking to American Michael Young and former NBA player Tim Kempton to lead their attack.

Indiana's bench hushes sweet Charlotte, 97-68

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) - The Indiana Pacers took a major step toward their first NBA divisional title Sunday, beating Charlotte 97-68 as their bench totally outplayed the Hornets' reserves.

Indiana's reserves outscored Charlotte's 25-2 in the first three quarters, helping the Pacers build a 69-52 advantage, and Indiana carried lead over the Hornets for the Central Division lead.

It was the fewest points allowed by Indiana since it joined the NBA in 1976. Rick Smith led a balanced Indiana offense with 18 points. Larry Johnson scored 24 points for Charlotte.

Bucks 102, Hawks 99. Glenn Robinson had 32 points and nine rebounds for host Milwaukee, which overcame a 17-point, third-quarter deficit.

SUNDAY'S RESULTS:
Indiana 97, Charlotte 68
Boston 110, Washington 96
Cleveland 79, Chicago 78
Milwaukee 102, Atlanta 99
Phoenix 104, Portland 94
Houston 123, Denver 120
San Antonio 101, LA Lakers 87

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
*Orlando	54	21	.720	-
*New York	49	25	.662	4.5
Boston	32	43	.427	22
Miami	28	46	.382	26
New Jersey	28	47	.373	26
Philadelphia	21	54	.283	33
Washington	18	57	.240	36

Central Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
*Indiana	48	37	.565	-
*Charlotte	45	39	.537	3
*Chicago	41	34	.547	7.5
*Cleveland	40	35	.533	8.5
Atlanta	37	38	.488	11.5
Milwaukee	30	45	.400	18.5
Detroit	27	47	.365	21

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
*San Antonio	56	18	.757	-
*Utah	53	22	.707	3
*Houston	44	31	.587	12.5
Denver	35	39	.473	21
Dallas	33	40	.450	22.5
Minnesota	20	54	.270	36

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
*Seattle	53	21	.716	-
*Phoenix	53	22	.707	5
*LA Lakers	47	28	.627	6.5
Portland	39	35	.527	14
Sacramento	35	39	.473	18
Golden State	25	51	.331	30
LA Clippers	18	58	.237	37.5

*clinched playoff berth

Aussies lose both openers to Walsh

ST JOHN'S, Antigua (Reuter) - Courtney Walsh dismissed Australian openers Mark Taylor and Michael Slater during two rain-shortened sessions of the third day of the second Test against West Indies yesterday.

At tea, they were 60 for two in their second innings - just 16 runs ahead.

Taylor, the Australian skipper, was out for the second time in the match trying to hook.

He departed for five during the 30-minute morning session when he swished at a short ball from Walsh and succeeded only in edging to wicketkeeper Junior Murray.

A brilliant, diving catch at third slip by West Indies captain Richie Richardson accounted for Slater during an equally short afternoon session.

His dismissal for 18 gave Walsh his eighth wicket of the match.

Crenshaw edges Love to win 2nd Masters

AUGUSTA (AP) - Ben Crenshaw won his second Masters on Sunday with brilliant putting over the last six holes, edging out Davis Love III by one stroke. His confident silky stroke came because of a lesson from master golf teacher Harvey Penick.

Crenshaw, troubled because his putter had lost a little magic, visited the 90-year-old, bedridden Penick at his home.

Penick gave him the confidence he needed. Apparently, it was an instant cure.

Penick died a week ago and Crenshaw helped bury him Wednesday, the day before the Masters. Crenshaw flew from Augusta to Austin, Texas, then flew back to Augusta to make his Thursday tee time.

On Sunday, Crenshaw had the lesson to fall back on when things got tight around Amen Corner, where the putting stroke has to be tension free.

Crenshaw came to the devilish, 155-yard, par-3 No. 12 one shot ahead of Davis Love III. Crenshaw's tee shot hit just over the front bunker and rolled back into the sand.

Crenshaw's shot from the sand left him 2 yards from the cup. Before he could putt, the cheers from Love's birdie on No. 14 reached him. He made the 2-yarder to stay at 13-under.

The 43-year-old Texan approached the tee on the 485-yard, par-5 No. 13 knowing

he needed a birdie on a hole most of the players were shooting under par. Crenshaw's wedge to the green left him a 5-meter putt, which he deftly made for a birdie.

Love finished 13-under after Crenshaw parred Nos. 14 and 15. Crenshaw lashed his 6-iron to within a yard of the pin on the 170-yard, par-3 No. 16, which is bordered by water down the left side.

Crenshaw made the left-to-right putt to take a one-shot lead. The ball died in the hole, just as Penick had taught him when Crenshaw was a teen-ager.

Crenshaw, who won the Masters in 1984 with an astonishing putting exhibition that

included a 22-yard putt on the 10th green, gave himself a two-shot cushion on the 400-yard, par-4 No. 17. His 9-iron second shot landed 12 feet from the hole.

He accurately read the left to right break again and the ball trickled in the hole.

Crenshaw played safe on the 18th hole. His second shot was short and he chipped to within 4 yards. Needing only a two-putt, Crenshaw nursed his lag putt within a foot of the hole. And then he dropped it in.

TOP 10: Ben Crenshaw 70-67-69-68 - 274 Davis Love III 69-71-66 - 275 Greg Norman 73-68-68-68 - 277 Jim Furyk 71-64-72-70 - 277 David Frost 66-71-71-71 - 279 Steve Elkington 73-67-72 - 279 Phil Mickelson 66-71-70-73 - 280 Scott Hoch 69-67-71-73 - 280 Curtis Strange 72-71-65-73 - 281 Fred Couples 71-69-67-73 - 283

Birdie-watching in Augusta

SPORTSWATCH

ARYEH DEAN COHEN

wonder what the celebration was all about.

I hadn't followed a tournament really closely in a while, so I was pleasantly surprised by what for me was something new: golf stats. We're not just talking leader boards, but periodic displays of players' performances in various tournaments. They may never replace baseball statistics, but golf stats were a definite boon in handicapping the tournament.

There are reports that CNN's demands for considerably more money is causing tension in negotiations with local cable suppliers over continued broadcasts. It looks like Ted Turner has upped the ante, but judging by another *This Week in the NBA* we caught Sunday night, our cable people should pony up whatever they can to extend the contract.

With up-to-date NBA action still depressingly absent from our local screens, Bob Lorenz and Mike Glenn crammed an amaz-

ingly entertaining show into a short half-hour time period Sunday at 6:30 pm.

We especially liked the graphic on the San Antonio Spurs' "Hair Apparents" to injured forward Dennis (What Color is My Hair Today?) Rodman and the feature on the great job the Spurs are doing without him since he was injured in a motorcycle accident.

This Week in the NBA has also added live interviews, with the Pistons' Grant Hill featured Sunday night, and the "In Case You Missed It" segment still features great bits, like Dallas players examining their uniform bottoms after losing yet another time at Boston Garden, with Lorenz explaining they were wondering "how they came up short" each time in Boston. A late-night, post-game version is also offered in the US, which should be added to the CNN seed ASAP.

Negotiations are also on between the NBA and Sports Channel about playoff broadcasts, according to a Sports Channel spokeswoman. The question is: what took them so long?

What more could go wrong for Utd?

MANCHESTER (AP) - Last season, Alex Ferguson and his team were all smiles as Manchester United achieved its first league and cup double. No one's smiling now.

This season has been a catalogue of misery for United, which is set to lose the league title, failed to make the last eight of the European Champions Cup and could wind up with nothing at all.

Off the field, it's been even worse. Star players Eric Cantona and Paul Ince ended up in court after clashes with spectators, and in the latest incident, United fans were involved in a brawl Sunday that left a Crystal Palace fan dead.

Ince has denied assault and still has to be tried, but Cantona was sentenced to two weeks in jail for assaulting Palace fan Matthew Simmons in a kung-fu-style attack at Selhurst Park. On appeal, Cantona had his sentence reduced to 120 hours community service but the French striker has been banned by the English FA until October.

Without Cantona, United's Premier League challenge has faltered and Ferguson's team is eight points behind Blackburn

with only six games remaining.

And to make matters worse, Cantona has lost his player-of-the-year award to Blackburn's Alan Shearer.

Cantona is also a target for wealthy Italian club Inter Milan and, unless he comes up with a new deal, he may never play for the Reds again.

United's record sum for Andy Cole could be a bust; and Ukrainian winger Andrei Kanchelskis, one of the stars of the team's double triumph last season, appears to have fallen out with Ferguson after demanding a guaranteed starting place on the team.

United fans were involved in a brawl with Palace supporters Sunday before the FA Cup semifinal at Villa Park, Birmingham. The violence, involving 100 fans, may have been sparked by bad feelings over the Cantona incident. It ended with a Palace supporter, 35-year-old Paul Nixon, dead on a pub parking lot after he had fallen under the wheels of a bus.

The game ended in a 2-2 tie. United twice coming back from a goal behind. The replay is at Villa Park tomorrow (Live coverage on Sports Channel at 9:35 pm).

Mac Netanya selling players to keep afloat

ORI LEWIS

BOTTOM of the table Maccabi Netanya, in dire financial straits, has decided to sell off some of its soccer players as a last resort.

Netanya is now at the bottom of the National League for the first time in 11 years. With only six matches left, safety in the top flight is far from assured.

Avishai Janno, currently one of the team's stars, has been put up for sale. Janno is said to have been offered to a team in the indoor soccer league in the US, but Maccabi Haifa boss Ya'akov Shahar has also been approached.

Even the sale or loan of as many as 12 players, including internationals Moshe Golan, Ronny Levy and Shai Holtzman have failed to stop the slide.

In other news, the national squads will convene for a first training session for their European Championship qualifying matches in Poland later this month.

The national squad will play its Polish counterpart on Tuesday, April 25 in Zabrze, with the under-21 side playing the day before.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Sampras slips to No.2 behind Agassi

Pete Sampras fell to No. 2 behind Andre Agassi in the international tennis rankings yesterday after 82 weeks at the top.

Sampras has the chance to regain the No. 1 spot depending on how Agassi fares in the Tokyo Open and how he manages on the clay courts of Barcelona's Royal Tennis Club tomorrow.

Bowls quintet sets sail for Durban

A five-woman lawn bowls squad set off today for Durban to participate in the Atlantic Rim tournament. Representing Israel in the 12-country competition are Maureen Hirschowitz, Merle Swerdlow, Renee Kusman, Isobel Myers and Carmel Sepp. Chana Goldberg is the team manager.

Israel is big fish in little pond

Israel placed first in the Small Nations Weightlifting Tournament in Malta yesterday finishing with 532 points. Switzerland was second with 476.

Kaufman takes monthly medal crown

Phil Kaufman won the monthly medal A division with a 69 net at the Caesarea Golf Club over the weekend. He had 10 pars and 3 birdies for the best gross of the day at 74. Max Shapiro was second with a 70 net including 11 pars and a birdie.

In the B division, Hillel Joseph had a 66 net, followed by Gerald Cooper with a 68. Dan Levron and Jules Cuburnek, both with 66, tied for first in the C division. Amos Amir led the D division with 67 net, followed by Solly Friedman with 69.

After the sixth round of the national Coca-Cola League, Haifa leads with 18 points, followed by Ra'anana-Kfar Sava (17) and Kfar Sharmyahu-Herzliya (13).

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Indyk, Muashar present credentials to Weizman

GREER FAY CASHMAN

US AMBASSADOR Martin Indyk and Jordanian Ambassador Marwan Jamil Muashar yesterday presented their credentials to President Ezer Weizman.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, Foreign Ministry Director-General Uri Savir and his deputy Eitan Bentsur, and Eitan Haber, head of the Prime Minister's Office, were on hand to join in the toasts.

"This is a happy and a sad day for me and the United States," said Indyk. "It is happy because I came here on a mission for the president and the secretary of state to strengthen relations and promote the cause of real peace. It is a sad day because along with the Israelis killed and injured in the terrorist outrage, an American citizen is in a critical condition." The American, 20-year-old Alisa Flatow from West Orange, N.J., died later yesterday.

Reviewing the close ties between America and Israel, Indyk recalled that America had stood alongside the State of Israel at its creation and at the signing of peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan. "We are at your side to share your greatest tragedies and we are at your side to share your greatest triumphs," he said.

In a reference to the previous day's conversation between US Secretary of State Warren Christopher and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, Indyk said that in order for the peace process to go forward, the Palestinian Authority must take stronger measures "to ensure that there is no haven for terrorism in Gaza."

The US needs to see a 100 percent effort, he said, adding: "We are not satisfied with the effort undertaken to date."

After expressing pride in being



President Ezer Weizman and US Ambassador Martin Indyk raise a toast upon the presentation of Indyk's credentials. He is the first Jew to serve as US ambassador to Israel. (Isaac Harari)

his country's first ambassador to Israel, Jordanian Ambassador Marwan Jamil Muashar declared, "We certainly condemn these terrorist acts in the strongest possible terms. These acts are meant to derail the peace process." The only way to counter such attacks, he said, "is to accelerate the peace process."

Reiterating Jordan's commitment to the peace process, Muashar said "we must try harder to prevent the anti-peace camp from succeeding."

Yesterday's ceremonies repre-

sented a break in protocol. Instead of retiring with the envoys for a private meeting, Weizman took them out into the Beit Hanassi garden, where he frustrated reporters by being in full view but out of earshot.

In a second break with protocol, Weizman, who is usually antagonistic towards the media, ushered Indyk towards the huge phalanx of reporters, TV cameramen and stills photographers and invited him to talk to them.

The second time around, it was Peres who introduced Muashar to

the press.

"We've come a long way since the peace process started in Madrid," commented Muashar, who between 1991 and 1994 was a member of the Jordanian delegation to the peace talks and its official spokesman.

Asked which Arab country he thought would be next to despatch an envoy to Israel, Peres replied, "I think it might be Morocco." Turning to Savir, Weizman boomed, "Bring the Syrian [ambassador]. Let's see you do it."



Jordanian Ambassador Marwan Jamil Muashar sits wrapped in an Israeli flag at yesterday's ceremony at Beit Hanassi. (Isaac Harari)

Shamir moved by ceremony

HERB KEINON

AMMAN

ISRAEL'S first ambassador to Jordan, Shimon Shamir, presented his credentials to Crown Prince Hassan yesterday in what Shamir described as a "very moving" ceremony.

Shamir said Hassan asked him to convey his condolences to the families of the Gaza Strip attacks, and said he was "shocked" by the incident.

Shamir was one of eight new ambassadors who presented their credentials in Jordan yesterday in a ceremony at the Basman Palace in Amman.

The credentials were presented to Hassan rather than King Hussein because the king is currently abroad.

The press was not allowed into the ceremony, but Shamir said that many countries around the world do not allow the press to attend such ceremonies, and that it should not be interpreted as an attempt to play down the event.

An honor guard of 50 soldiers stood at attention and saluted when "Hatikva" was played in the Jordanian palace.

Shamir said Hassan reiterated Jordan's commitment to the development and continuation of the peace process.

In a meeting with deputy foreign minister Yossi Beilin, Hassan said he hoped Sunday's attacks in Gaza would not disrupt the peace process.

Ross starts preparations for next economic summit

HERB KEINON

AMMAN

THE follow-up to last year's Casablanca economic conference will be held in Amman between October 24-November 1 to try and further "the economic underpinnings to peace," US special emissary Dennis Ross said yesterday.

Ross, who headed the US delegation to a steering committee meeting in Amman yesterday to begin preparing for the October conference, said that "our objectives should be that the material benefits of peace be felt as quickly as possible."

According to Ross, yesterday's meeting "makes it clear that seeking to develop the material benefits of peace is an ongoing effort that is going to persist and move ahead."

Among those attending yesterday's conference at the Forte Grand Hotel in Amman, which also houses the Israeli embassy, were representatives from Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Egypt, the PLO, Japan, Russia, the Economic Community and the US. Noticeably absent, however, were any representatives from the Gulf States.

Israeli officials in Amman would not deny that anger over Jordan's support of Iraq during the Gulf War was the reason that the Gulf States did not attend yesterday's meeting. Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi

Beilin said he believes the US "will make an effort" to persuade the Gulf States to attend the conference in October.

The PLO's delegation to the meeting also made a veiled threat to boycott October's conference. Samir Abdallah, a high-ranking official in the Palestinian Authority's economic ministry, told the meeting that if the "economic situation in Gaza does not improve, there will be no reason for the Palestinians to attend an economic conference."

Israeli officials downplayed the

threat, however, saying that it was a way for the Palestinians to get the message about their dire economic conditions across to the international community.

Beilin, who characterized yesterday's meeting as "very, very good," said the Amman conference will be about half the size of the Casablanca conference, attended by some 2,000 delegates and which was highly political. This time, he said, the emphasis will be "on making money in the Middle East."

Nevertheless, the final day of the conference will deal with political matters, and will likely be attended by a number of different heads of state.

Northern settlements call off strike

DAVID RUDGE

HEADS of confrontation line settlements called off a strike that was to have been staged in towns and villages along the Lebanese border yesterday.

Metulla local council head Yossi Goldberg, who heads the forum, said the scheduled one-day shutdown had been postponed because of the security situation and promises by the government to deal with outstanding problems.

Representatives of the forum of heads of confrontation line settlements, led by Goldberg, met with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and other ministers and officials in Jerusalem yesterday.

It was the second meeting with Rabin following the decision by the council heads at an emergency gathering in Nahariya last week to stage a strike to protest what they described as the disregard by successive governments of their settlements' plight.

This followed Katyusha rocket attacks on Nahariya and Kiryat Shmona at the end of last month in which Benny Unassi, 17, from Nahariya was killed and more than 12 people were wounded.

Rabin told the council leaders at the meeting yesterday that he had instructed the special committee of directors-general of ministries dealing with the confrontation line settlements to investigate all the problems and submit a detailed report within three weeks.

The director-general of the Prime Minister's Office, Shimon Sheves, said at the meeting that NIS 550 million would be invested in the confrontation line settlements this year, in addition to special projects such as the construction of new classrooms. The meeting was also attended by Housing Minister Binyamin

Ben-Eliezer, Agriculture Minister Ya'acov Tsuri, deputy ministers Mordechai Gur and Micha Goldman, in addition to Sheves and the directors-general of the Agriculture and Interior ministries.

Goldberg, however, said the council heads' concerns was in solving outstanding problems "above and beyond" those relating to regular local authority budgets.

"There is a shortage of security rooms, bomb shelters and ambulances in the region, as well as other problems including the need to invest in infrastructure and development," said Goldberg.

"We have decided to wait for a while now, because of the security situation in the country and because we want to see what the government does, but in deeds not just words," Goldberg added.

IDF soldier injured, two Hizbullah men killed in zone

DAVID RUDGE

AN IDF soldier was lightly wounded during another round of long-range fighting with Hizbullah gunmen in the security zone yesterday, as Hizbullah maintained the pressure of daily attacks.

Hizbullah announced last night that two of its men had been killed in the fighting, which took place around Rehman and Soujoud.

The incident yesterday morning came less than 24 hours after members of Hizbullah's fighting arm, the Islamic Resistance, ambushed and killed five South Lebanese Army soldiers in a different part of south Lebanon.

The army spokesman said the IDF soldier was wounded when several mortar rounds were fired at an IDF outpost in the Rehman region in the zone's northeastern sector.

The spokesman said the soldier was lightly hurt and was treated at the scene. Hizbullah gunmen also opened fire with RPG's and light weapons at a nearby SLA post in Soujoud, without inflicting casualties or causing damage.

IDF and SLA gunners returned fire and blasted suspected Hizbullah targets north of the zone in response

to the long-range attacks.

Later in the afternoon, more shooting was reported, this time at an SLA position in the western sector of the zone, and IDF and SLA gunners again returned fire.

The incident in which the five SLA soldiers were killed occurred on Sunday night in the Jezzine enclave region when Hizbullah gunmen hit an SLA truck transporting the men with a Sagger anti-tank missile and set it ablaze.

The five soldiers were all from the same village, Ein Majdalaine, and their deaths were seen as a further blow to SLA morale.

Hizbullah followed up the attack by increasing its psychological war on the SLA. A statement issued by the organization in Beirut yesterday said: "Israel cannot protect its own

troops so don't expect any protection for yourselves."

"They (Israel) are seducing you with money, but that's not much use when you have to give up your honor, dignity and even your lives. You are being used as sandbags and minesweepers, and your lives are nothing to them (Israel)," the statement said.

The losses suffered by Hizbullah in the past few weeks, including the recent slaying of one of its regional commanders, Roda Yassin, in an IAF helicopter gunship attack, does not seem to have affected the organization's fighting capabilities.

Lebanese security sources were quoted in Beirut papers as saying that the number of attacks in the zone is now averaging almost three a day - mostly by Hizbullah.

Syrian newspaper: Israeli security demands are 'impossible'

DAVID RUDGE

SYRIA yesterday rejected as impossible Israel's security demands on the Golan Heights, and reiterated that any arrangements should be equal on both sides of the fence border.

The official newspaper Tishreen did not specify the demands, but said they reflected Israel's rejection of the principle of equality and the balance of forces.

"Israel is putting impossible demands for security arrangements," Tishreen said. "It rejects the principle of equality and insists on disturbing the balance of forces. They interfere in the core of Syria's sovereignty. It is natural that Syria rejects such blackmail. Syria reminds Israeli rulers that the basis of peace could not be applied on one party and not the other," the daily said.

State-run Radio Damascus said yesterday that Syria is in no hurry to make peace with Israel if that peace is not "just and comprehensive."

"If the option is between a

fragile, partial deal and a just and comprehensive peace, Syria will choose the just and comprehensive peace no matter how long it will take," the radio said in a commentary.

It said Syria will not be intimidated by the "weapon of time" used by Israel to achieve a partial deal.

"Syria is not in a hurry," the radio said. "It will not be involved in anything that will not serve its interests, or respond to its principles in accordance with the resolutions of the international community."

On a separate matter, the Lebanese press carried reports yesterday of Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Shara denying as "baseless" earlier stories that the Syrian authorities had instructed Palestinian terrorist organizations to leave Damascus.

The papers quoted Shara as

saying that the Syrians did not consider the 10 Palestinian factions, which have their headquarters in Damascus, as terrorist organizations.

"We cannot enter into an agreement leading to a reconciliation with Israel, and a war with others," Shara was quoted as saying. Furthermore, he said that Syria could not accept anybody trying to "dictate how it should act on its own soil."

In London, Amnesty International released a report yesterday saying that thousands of political prisoners remain in prison on political grounds at the mercy of government security forces, who are guilty of gross human rights violations.

"Thousands of these political prisoners and have been denied the right to fair trial, scores have simply 'disappeared', others continue to be held years after they have fully served their prison sentences and dozens have died in custody," the report said.

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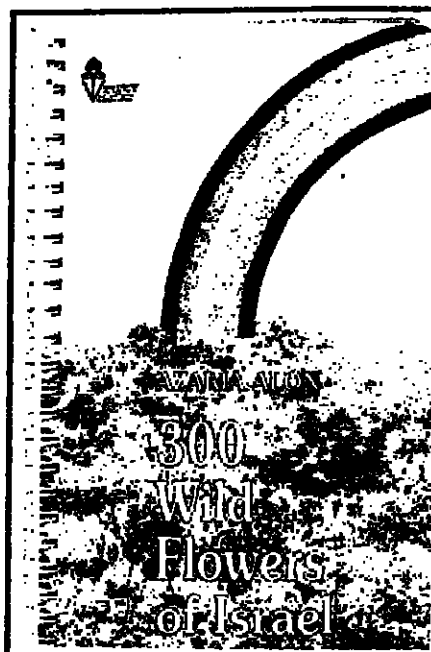
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